

A
LEARNED AND
EXCELLENT TREA-
tise, containing all the prin-
cipall groundes of Christian
Religion:

Set downe, by way of conference, in a most
plaine and familiar manner.

*Written first in French, by Master MATHEV
VIREL: after, translated into Latine: and then
into English, for the use of our Countrey-men.*

The sixth and last impression
Now newly revised, and very much amended accord-
ing to the best and perfectest Copy: with a Table
thereunto annexed.

1. Tim. 4. 15.

These things meditate, and labour in them; that
thy profiting may be manifest to all.



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of the Brazen Serpent. 1603.



TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

an admonition touching reading.



DT falleth out in matter of learning, as it doth in matter of meates. For, as in meates, one and the selfe same dish is diuersly set forth, according to the inuention of the dresser, and appetite of the eater: so, in learning, one and the selfe same point is diuersly handled, according to the discretion of the writer, and capacitie of the reader. Hence it commeth that in humane learning, euery Writer (almost) hath his Grammar, his Rhetoricke, his Logicke, his Philosophie; and in diuine knowledge, his Catechisme, his Common places, his Commētaries. Many complaine of this, as a thing which distracteth the minde, confoundeth the memorie, and hindereth the iudgement. And not without cause. For, as variety of meats do corrupt in the stomacke, and breed sicknesse, rather then preserue health: so varietie of treatises, vpon one and the selfe same thing, doth hinder the growth and profiting of diuerse, in soundnesse of iudgement and godly life. But, the reformation hereof is a worke worthy of all the Churches, Princes, and States in Christendome: for the beginning and perfecting whereof, priuate men can but pray and wish well; and euery man carefully looke to the warrant of his owne worke. In the meane time, let no man blame the varietie and choise of Gods manifolde giftes (which, both in bodily and spirituall things, set forth the riches of his wisdom and goodnesse): but, let vs blame the corruption and vanity of men; who doe either not at all vse, or else greatly abuse the gifts and blessings of God bestowed vpon them. This vanitie appeareth partly in the foode of the body; but more specially in the foode of the soule. For no man wil refuse his meate, except it be in some extreame passion. Besides, how carefull are the most part in making their promise? how curious in asking what is wholesome or hurtfull for them? how precise and constant in keeping their howers for dinner and supper? how willing to keepe

1. Sam. 28.
23.

The peface

themfelues to fome few kinds of meate? though they haue often taffed & fed on them before. But, touching the food of the foule (which confifteth chiefly in a holy attendance on the publike worfhip of God, and partly in priuate reading, meditation, and prayer) how many do refufe it, as a fruitlefle and vnfauiory thing? And though the moft part be content, for fome carnal refpect, to fhew themfelues in the publike afsemblies; yet, who fhall find a faithfull Chriftian, that is carefull to redeeme the time, and to make himfelfe, by priuate reading and meditation, more fit to reape fruit by the publike miniftery of the word and Sacraments? But, know thou (beloued) that as they, who through ciuill, or, prejudice, or felf-loue, are fo addicted to their priuate ftudies, that they defpife or neglect the publike miniftery, fhall (without speedy mercy of God) fall into diuers fond opinions, and dangerous errors, & pine away in their ignorance and fins: fo, to little purpofe is our hearing of fermons abroad, if there be not a fettled and cōftant courfe of priuate prayer, reading, meditation and conference, at home. But, becaufe my purpofe is now to fpeake only of reading, and that very briefly (for the argument is infinite, and I haue fomewhat touched it elfewhere), I would intreate thee, Chriftian Reader, and in the Lord Iefus befeech thee (if my request may feem reasonable) that thou wouldeft be as wife for thy foule, as thou art for thy body; as mindfull of the life to come, as thou art of this prefent life; and that, to this end, thou wouldeft obferue thefe foure things, as well for the one as for the other. Firft, therefore, make thy procuifion of good bookes; efpecially of the booke of all bookes, I meane the holy Canonical Scriptures, in that refpect called the Bible: and then of fome others, fuch as are moft fit for thy calling and capacitie. And, becaufe thou fhalt want either money to buy, leysure to read, iudgement to vnderftand, or memory to beare away the fubftance of all good bookes, prouide the beft. Many will fay, they find by experience, that in meate and apparell the beft is beft cheape: and thou fhalt be fure to find, that, among bookes, the beft will yeeld meft fruit to thy foule. Secondly, be-
caufe the moft part are babes in iudgement and difcerning
of

Preface to
mafter Cup-
pers Ser-
mons.

Four things
to be obfer-
ued in rea-
ding.

1.
Prouide the
beft bookes.

H. br. 5. 13.

The Preface.

of spirituall things (though euery foole be wise in his own
eyes) not knowing what is fit and profitable, and what is In chusing
hurtful and inconuenient: let me intreat thee to ask coun- vse the ad-
sell & aduise of the godly learned, especially of thine owne use of the
pastor (if God haue blessed thee with an able and faithfull godly lear-
man), or, otherwise, of him whose publike ministerie may ned.
giue thee hope, that his senses are exercised in the discern-
ing of good and euill. No wise man will receiue a writing
for the least plot of ground, without the counsell of some
learned Lawyer: nor a medicine for his body, without the
aduise of some learned Physitian: and wilt thou, not as-
king direction of some godly Diuine, aduenture vpon a
booke, containing perhaps some damnable error (which
may conuey from thee thy heavenly inheritance) or some
deadly poyson, which may kil thy soule? Do it not. Thirdly, Be constant
remember that nothing is more hard, then to bee con- in keeping
stant in holy exercises. For, herein, the subtiltie and rage of of houres.
our inuisible enemy Sathan doth most notably appeare:
Herein, the frailty and corruption of flesh and blood will
bewray it selfe. Here, profit and pleasure, businesse & idlenesse,
matters at home and matters abroad, company, and
a thousand occasions will lie in our way, as so many lios, to
let and hinder vs. Therefore herein gird vp the loyns of thy
minde, put vpon thee the whole armour of God, and daily
renew thy couenât (of redeeming the time) made with god
and thine owne conscience. Thou seest, that men, who are
most greedy of the world, will not misse (scarce once in a
yeare) their ordinarie houres of eating and drinking. Why
then shouldest thou be so fickle and vnfaithfull, in forget-
ting and omitting the times of reading and praying to
God? Fourthly, when thou hast begun a good booke, giue
not ouer, til thou haue ended it: and when thou hast read it
once ouer, let it not bee tedious to thee to read it ouer a-
gaine and againe. For, thou shalt finde the second reading
more fruitfull then the first, and the third more fruitfull
then the second: & so the oftner the better. This is a great
vanitie and euill sicknesse among men, that if they haue
once seen the title of a booke, and the Authors name, over.
and read two or three leaues thereof, it is cast at their
feet

The Preface.

heeles euer after :as if they had attained all that could bee learned by it , when they can name the title and Author of it. Wherefore, for this point, marke the course & maner of men in the keeping & increasng of their bodily strength. Though they eate their fill of this kind of meate to day, yet they come with great desire and fresh appetite to the same againe, within a day or two; yea oftentimes the same day: otherwise it argueth either an extreame weakenesse, or an intollerable daintinesse of the stomacke. Heere perhaps thou wilt aske what bookes, beside the holy Bible, I would commend vnto thee. Wherein though I see some difficultie, because it cannot be done without comparisns (which are counted odious) yet for thy good I will not spare to shew my poore opiniõ: which is, that no one Author (that I haue read) hath set downe the summe and groundes of Christian Religion more hollie and happilie, for the capacite and edifying of all sorts, then this present Writer. For this cause, I specially recommend him to thee; as one, by whom thou maist exceedingly profite, if thou cal vpon the name of God through Iesus Christ, and binde thy selfe to diligence and constancie: remembring, that as one dish of meate, well chewed and digested, will comfort nature more then diuers delicates, that lie raw and vndigested in the stomacke; so one booke often and thoroughly read will doe thy soule more good, then the superficiall sight and taste of a thousand. And so I commend thee to the Lord: who vouchsafe to giue thee wisdom in all things, for his mercies sake. Blacke Friers, the 23. of Iulie.

Thine in the Lord Iesus,

STEPH. EGERTON.

The argument and order of the three

Bookes of Christian religion.

The first Booke

DEclareth the fundamentall pointes of our saluation. 1. And it consisteth of foure Chapters.

1. The first wherof intreateth of the knowledge of God: who, being perfectly iust, and perfectlie mercifull, doth not onely shew mercie, but also declare his iustice.

ibidem.

2. The second, of the knowledge of man: who, being a most miserable sinner, is guiltie of eternall death before the iudgement seate of God.

9

3. The third, of the knowledge of Christ: who, having satisfied the most perfect iustice of God for vs, openeth a way to his most perfect mercy, wherby we may obtain forgiveness of our sinnes.

14

4. The fourth, of faith: wherby we are made one with Christ; and, so, partakers of all his benefites, and euen of euerlasting life.

21

The second Booke

Containeth the testimonies of our saluation. 72 And it consisteth of two Chapters.

1. The first wherof intreateth of good workes: by the which, faith (lying hid in our heartes) is manifested.

ibidem

2. The second, of praier: which, for the testifying and confirming of our faith, hath the first and chiefe place among good workes.

178

A 4

The

The contentes.

The third Booke

SEtteih before vs the outward meanes, whereby God bringeth vs to saluation. 210. And it consisteth of foure Chapters.

1. The first whereof intreateth of the ministerie of the word: by the which, the Holy Ghost begetteth faith in our hearts, keepeth it there, and increaseth it. ibidem.

2. The second, of the Sacraments, ordained of God to bee as scales of the word; to the end wee might, with greater assurance, embrace the promises reuealed vnto vs in the word of Christ. 232.

3. The third, of Baptisme: whereby God testifieth, that we are receiued of him into couenant; forasmuch as he communicateth Christ vnto vs, together with his benefites. 237.

4. The fourth, of the Lords Supper: by the which God witnesseth, that his couenant is confirmed in vs; in that he maketh vs more & more partakers of Christ and his giftes. 242.

The summe of all, laid downe in a triple or three-fold method: that wee may the better know the order and coherence of euerie point of Christian Religion; as also the truth, excellencie, and profite of the same. 255.



THE FIRST BOOKE OF
Christian religion: wherein the
grounds of our saluation are handled.

Speakers.

Theophilus. Matthew.

CHAP. I.

*Of the knowledge of God: who, being perfectly iust
and perfectly mercifull, doth neuer exercise his
mercy, but that also he doth exercise his iustice.*

Theophilus.



Oft deare brother, I haue often bene desirous to heare, from your mouth, the whole doctrine of Christian Religion, deliuered in a right and exact course of teaching: because once I heard you intreate, both perspicuously and briefly, of some maine pointes thereof, to my great satisfaction.

Math. If my loue and diligence, in other matters, haue neuer beene wanting, to you (most louing *Theophilus*) perswade your selfe, that (at conuenient leisure) I wil so much the more chearefully fulfill your desire, because the thing is of it selfe profitable, and such (I hope) as shalbe to mine owne edifying. For, this is proper to Christian doctrine, that, the oftner it is handled, the more largely it extendeth her force and working, in the hearts of the faithfull.

Theoph. Go to then: can you now bee at leysure to lay forth, vnto me, al the chiefe points (or heads) of Christian religion, in order as I am determined to aske you? and you shall finde me diligent to put them in writing; that to they may be imparted to my brethren.

Mat.

Mat. Were it so, that I wāted leysure, yet (I assure you) ther is no businesse, but I would lay it aside to satisfie you in this behalf. For, what is there, wherein time can be better spent?

Theoph. Seeing therefore our speeche shall bee of Christian religion, I desire to be taught, what is meant by the name, Religion.

Mat. Before I answer, I beseech God, our heauēly Father, to be present with vs by his holy spirit: so that we may neither think nor speak any thing, which shall not tend to the honour of his owne name, and to the edification of his whole Church.

The name (Religion) is deriued of a word that signifieth to binde. And it is a spirituall bond: by the which, men in a holy attonement are vnited to God, and held in his loue and feare; that so at length they may bee partakers of his heauenly glory, and of the blessed life. Which no religion can bring to passe, but that which is Christiā: that is to say, that, whose foundation is laid in Christ.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because that, through Christ alone, by faith (not by any merit of ours) we are brought againe into fauour with God (and euen vnited to him, with the closest bond), that so he may be glorified of vs here, and eternally in heauen.

Theoph. From whence haue we prooe of that?

Mat. Out of the word of God; the surest prooe that is vpon the truth whereof resteth all Christian doctrine.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou, by the word of God?

Mat. The Canonicall bookes of the Bible: whereunto, for this cause, is giuen the name of Holy scripture.

Theoph. How came it to passe, that those bookes were called the Bible?

Mat. The Christians of the primitiue Church, after they had gathered the bookes of the Prophets and Apostles, into one volume, called it (for the excellency thereof) *βιβλια*, in Greeke (that is *Bible* or *bookes*) because those bookes far passe al others. For truly the word of God, in worthinesse and excellency, goeth beyond all the words of men.

Theoph. But, how may it certainly be prooued, that the doctrine, which is contained in those bookes, is the word of
God?

God: seeing that the Prophets and Apostles, who it is certainly known were men, were the Authors and writers of them.

Mat. First of all indeede it is necessarie, that the holie Ghost, which spake by them, may whose instruments onely they were, do engraue that faith in our hearts. Then, that assurance may be confirmed, by obseruing the speciall excellencie which it is easie to perceiue in those writings, as also the most holy effects which they worke in vs.

Theoph. What excellencie doe you meane?

Mat. First of all, the maiestie of the spirite of God, which shineth in them most euidently. For euery where there appeare diuine and heauenly things, nothing earthly and fading, or that agreeth with the corrupt affections of the flesh.

Secondly, the consent of all the partes among themselves. For, although they were pened by diuerse writers, in sundry places, and at sundry times, yet is there no lesse accord, harmony, and consent betwene them, then if they had agreed together of the matter before.

Finally, the fulfilling of al the prophecies, deliuered long before; yet precisely accomplished each of them in their proper time. Hence it is that Dauid giueth them most excellent commendation, saying; The words of the Lord are pure wordes, as the siluer is tried in a fornace of earth, fined seauen fold. I say nothing of their antiquitie; and that, not without miracle, they were preserved among so many enemies, which would haue destroyed them, and among such cruell persecutions.

Theoph. But what holy effects do they worke in vs?

Mat. This generall we may mark, that alwaies there was (as to this day, there is) a church, which hath bin gathered together by the authority of the holy scripture: that is to say, a cōpany of me of diuers ages, sexes, & cōditiōs, which worshipped God according to the instructiōs & doctrine of that Scripture: a good part of which in all ages haue sealed the same with their blood. But the speciall or particular effects are, that they rauish the reader, and enforce him to the reuerence of God, no otherwise then as if God him-

selfe

Concerning God.

4
 selfe did speake.

Also, that, by the reading of them, our heartes are touched with an earnest feeling of our sinnes.

Last of all, that they lift vp our minds aboue all heauens, kindle within vs a desire of a better life, & cause vs that (in comparison thereof) we do easily despise all other things.

All which are not done by any writings of men; bee they neuer so artificiallie handled. Therefore the Apostle to the Hebrues saith, that the word of God is liue-
Heb. 4. 12. lie, mightie in operation, and pearcing more then any two edged sword; and that it doth reach euen to the diuinding asunder of the soule and the spirite, of the ioyntes and marrow.

Theoph. Verilie, these are most strong arguments, to prooue the truth of Gods word. But, there be some which affirme, that all the authoritie and credit of it dependeth vpon the Church.

Mat. They deale herein, as if one should say, that the light of the sun hangeth vpon mans testimony. For, as the sun shall not cease to shine, though all men were blind: so, the truth of Gods word is no whit bettered, or empai red, by the applause or disallowance of men.

Moreouer, how can it bee, that the authoritie of the word of God should depend vpon the allowance or consent of the Church? seeing that the Church it selfe borroweth all her authoritie of the word, as it were of her foundation. For, it is built vpon the foundation of the
Eph. 2. 20 Apostles and Prophets.

Theoph. But they say, that in this place, it is not meant of the trueth of the word in it selfe; but of the meane whereby it is apprehended, and receiued of men. Which they affirme to hang vpon the testimony and allowance of the Church. To which purpose, they alledge this saying of
Aug. contra a certaine Father; I should not haue beleeued the Gospell,
epist. fund. if the authoritie of the Church had not moued me.

Manich. *Mat.* This sentence maketh not for them. For, this was the minde of that holy man; that, beeing a stranger from the faith, he was moued by the authoritie of the Church to embrace the Gospell; and that, after, by the
 working

The first Booke

working of the holy Ghost, he was confirmed in that faith. Which he doth a little before declare, in these words; The Church first calleth vs to belecue that, which yet we are not able to see: that so, beeing made stronger in faith, wee may come to vnderstand that which wee belecue; God himself, now (not men) inwardly strengthening and enlightning our minde.

Which thing I doubt not but it is true: namely, that the witnesse, which the Church giueth to the word of God, doth not a little mooue vs to embrace it. But then onely this is, when our faith is beginning. For, when it is come to any age, & that we our selues, by reading and hearing of the word, haue tasted of that truth: then we belecue not, by the testimony of the Church; but by that which the holy Ghost sealeth in our hearts. Insomuch, as if the Church should then teach vs a doctrine diuers from that, we would not giue our consents vnto it. This shall bee made plaine by the example of the Samaritanes. These, hearing the report of the woman with whom the Lord had spokē, (namely that he was the Christ) beleueued. But, after that themselves had heard him, they sayde vnto the woman; Now wee beleue not any more, for thy saying. For we haue heard him our selues, and do know, that this is indeed the Christ, the Sauour of the world.

Ioh. 4. 39.

42.

Theoph. This example bringeth no small light to this doubt. But hitherto sufficiently of the truth and authoritie of the word of God: now let vs in a few wordes consider, what it doth containe.

Mat. It hath in it, at large, whatsoeuer concerneth the glory of God for our good and saluation.

Theoph. By what meanes doth it teach vs to attaine saluation?

Mat. By the true knowledge of God, and of Iesus Christ: the which it teacheth.

Theoph. Let vs therefore first intreate of the knowledge of God: and after we will speake of Christ, in the proper place. What do the holy Scriptures teach vs concerning God?

Mat. Three heads or principall things, whereby hee

is distinguished from all fained Gods) besides those which wee doe know by naturall instinct giuen vs of God, and by consideration of the creatures; namelie, that God is a spirituall essence, eternall, of infinite wisdom, goodnes, and power.

Rom. 1. 20.

Theoph. Rehearse the first of those three.

Of the Trinitie.

Mat. That, in one diuine essence, there be three distinct persons; the Father, the Sonne, the holy Ghost.

The Father indeede is the beginning of the Godhead; but that is in respect of the order of the persons. For, in the Godhead it selfe, we may not seeke for first or last.

The Sonne is the wisdom of the Father, begotten of him before the world.

The holy Ghost is the infinite power proceeding from the Father and the Sonne.

Now, these three persons are distinct one from the other, not onely by those properties wherein the one of them can not communicate or partake with the other, but also by the difference of their actions. For, the scripture ascribeth, to the Father, the beginning of working; to the Sonne, wisdom and counsell; and to the holy Ghost, vertue and power. Neuerthelesse, they bee (to all respects) equall in eternitie, dignitie and power: because there is one most vndiuided diuine essence common to them, and are therefore one God. Howbeit, so often as there is mention made of the Father together with the Son, or together with the holy Ghost, the name of God is the peculiarly giue to the Father (as to the first person of the Deitie); and yet nothing is diminished of the Godhead of the Son, or of the holy Ghost: but herin the vnitie of the essence is retained, & respect is had to the order of the persons. Hence it is, that the Sonne is called the Sonne of God, & the Spirit is called the spirit of God. But, whensoever the name of God is put indefinitely (that is without any addition of persons) the Sonne and the Spirit are no lesse noted by it, then the Father. As, when the Scripture saith; Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serue. To the King eternall, immortall, inuisible, to God onely wise, be honor and glorie for ever and euer.

1st. 3. 16.

Gen. 1. 2.

Mat. 4. 10.

1st Tim. 1. 17

Theoph.

Theoph. Verily, this doctrine is beyond all the reach and vnderstanding of man.

Mat. It is indeede : and yet to bee beleueed; as that which God in his word hath reuealed for our saluation: which cannot stand without it.

Theoph. In what place of Scripture is this doctrine taught?

Mat. It may bee gathered out of diuerse places : but most easilie it is declared by this of *Iohn*; There be three which beare witness in heauen, the Father, the Word, and the holy Spirit: and these three are one. When he saith three, he noteth the distinction of the persons : when hee saith one, he sheweth the vnitie of the essence. 1. Ioh. 5. 7.

Theoph. What is the reason, that the Sonne of God is called Word, and the third person Spirit?

Mat. To the Sonne, that name is attributed, by a similitude. For, as speeche is the declarer of the minde in men: so, by his Word, doth God make himselfe knowne vnto vs. Concerning the third person, that also is called the Spirite, by a Similitude borrowed from men : that wee may vnderstand it to be, as it were, a breath comming out of the mouth of God : not such as vanisheth; but which is his power spread ouer all things : and yet abideth alwaies in himselfe. The Prophet doth not obscurely expresse bothe the similitudes, in these wordes; By the word of the Lord were the heauens made, and by the breath of his mouth all the hoste of them. Wherein he doth plainly teach; that, the Father, by his eternall wisdom which is the Sonne, and by his infinite power, which is the holy Ghost, did make all things. Psal. 33. 6.

Theoph. Hitherto enough of the Trinitie. For, the more deeply the sharpenesse of mans wit strueth to looke into it, the more it is blunted with the greatnesse of that mysterie. Now, therefore, declare the other head of the knowledge of God.

Mat. It teacheth, that God did not onely in six daies by his immeasurable power make all things; but also that they are stil preserued and governed by his wisdom and prouidence, and that his hand is neuer from the worke : Of Gods prouidence.

so

so that no one of all the things done in heauen or earth, commeth to passe by chaunce, or fortune. For the Scripture witnesseth,

- Psal.* 29.3. That the Lord sendeth thunders, winds, and tempests.
Iob. 37.5.6 That he thundreth with his voice, & saith to the snowe,
 Be thou vpon the earth,
Psal. 147.8 That he couereth the heauens with cloudes, and prepar-
 eth the raine for the earth.

2 *Isay.* 51.15 That he diuideth the sea, when the waues thereof doe
 roare.

Psal. 136.25. That he giueth meat vnto all flesh.

That he maketh peace, and createth euill.

Isay. 45.7. That hee killeth, and maketh aliue: that hee bringeth
 1. *Sam.* 2.6 downe to the graue, and bringeth vp againe.

That he maketh the wound, and bindeth it vp; smiteth,
Job. 5.18. and maketh whole.

Dan. 2.21. That he changeth times and seasons, taketh away kings,
 and setteth vp kings.

Psal. 33.16 That he ordereth wars, and appointeth the victorie.

Psal. 75.7. That he throweth downe, and listeth vp.

Pro. 16.9. That he directeth the steps of men.

Pro. 16.1. That he guideth the answer of the tongue.

Pro. 21.1. That he turneth the hearts of men, at his pleasure.

Finally, the prouidence of God leaueth no place for
Pro. 16.33 Fortune. For, Salomon affirmeth, that euen the whole
 disposition of the lot is of the Lord. It is plaine there-
 fore, that God ordereth all things; but is not busied or tur-
 moiled with any thing.

Theoph. Now remaineth the third point of the know-
 ledge of God.

O' Gods
 iustice.

Mat. That God is perfectly iust, and perfectly merci-
 full. For, seeing he is of an infinite essence, all his proprie-
 ties and vertues be also infinite. For, they bee essentiall in
 him: with whom (saith *Iames*) there is no change or sha-
 dow of alteration; That is to say, that, in God, there is no-
 thing subiect to increate, change, or lessening. Whensoever
 therefore he doth exercise his mercy, he doth likewise ex-
 ercise his iustice; punishing the guilty & offenders, with de-
 served punishment. For this cause, when *Moses* had largely

in these words commended the mercie of God, *The Lord God merciful and gracious, slowe to anger, and abounding in goodnesse: straight way after hee addeth, not making the wicked innocent.* Exo. 34. 6. 7

CHAP. II.

Of the knowledge of Man: who, being a most miserable sinner, is before God guiltie of eternall death.

Theophilus.



Seeing God acquiteth not the guilty, it is so farre off that by the knowledge of him man is lifted vp into the hope of saluation, that, cleane cōtrariwise, he perceiueth his condemnation to be proued and confirmed: because hee aboundeth with innumerable both infirmities and sinnes, for the which he is found guilty before the most iust iudgement leate of almightie God.

Mat. Man is not onely, as thou sayest, defiled with many vices and infirmities, but also by his owne nature, first an enemy of God. 2. full of wickednesse. 3. a seruant of sinne, that is to say, such a one as hath neither will nor power to doe well. Of mannes free will,

Th. Thou doest indeed very much throwe downe man.

Mat. I doe not: but God himselfe, in these words; The wickednesse of man is great in the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are onely euill continually. Moreouer, in the same Chapter, hee teacheth vs, that man is nothing else but flesh. Gen. 6. 5. Verse. 3.

And Saint Paule plainly affirmeth, that the vnderstanding of the flesh is enmity against God: because saith he, it is not subiect to the law of God: for indeed it cannot be. Rom. 8. 7.

The same also he affirmeth in another place, when he saith, that we are strangers from God, and enemies, our mind being set vpon euill workes: as if he shoud say, that the enmitie, hid in the heart, was betrayed by euill deedes. Col. 1. 21.

In another place also the same Apostle saith, that we are carnall, Rom. 7. 14.

caruall, solde vnder sinne: that is, that we are the bond-
slaves of sinne.

2. Cor. 3. 5. Yea, he proceedeth so farre as to say, that of our selues
we are not sufficient to thinke, much lesse able to doe,
that which is good.

Theoph. But, was this the minde of the Apostle, to shew
that all generally be bondmen to sinne?

Mat. Yea verily. For, speaking of the naturall corrupti-
on of man, out of the testimonie of *Dauid* he saith plainly;
Rom. 3. 9. We haue prooued before, that both Iewes and Gentiles
Psal. 14. 3. be vnder sinne; as it is written, There is none iust, no not
Eccl. 3. 2. 3. one: there is not any which vnderstandeth, or which see-
keth after God. They haue all gone out of the way, they
haue bene made altogether vnprofitable; There is none
that doth good, no not one.

The faithfull, indeede, be exempted out of that number:
but yet not because they are not such by nature; but be-
cause God (such is his mercy) amendeth our wickednesse
& corruption, by the benefit of regeneration, whereby, he
Phil. 2. 13. worketh in vs both the will and power to do well: as in
the proper place shall be more largely declared. But all the
vnbeleeuers, as they be vnprofitable to any good worke,
so they are caried with great violence vnto euill.

Theoph. But the thing it selfe seemeth to speake other-
wise. For, there be (as there euer haue bene) some, which
which haue bene endued with most excellent gifts.

Mat. 7. 18. *Mat.* The Scripture saith, It cannot be, that an ill tree
should bring forth good fruite. It may indeede sometime
bring forth such, as be goodly to see to; which notwith-
standing are not good. So also may wee finde many infi-
dels, which do works hauing a beautifull shew, but such as
cannot be good indeede. For the heart, which God spe-
cially looketh vnto, is corrupt and vncleane: for it can-
not any way be made cleane, but by faith. Therefore the
Act. 15. 9. *Rom. 14. 23* Apostle saith; Whatsoeuer is not of faith, is sinne.

Theoph. Wherein standeth that vncleaneesse of the
heart?

Mat. In that, doing these beautifull works, they be nei-
ther touched with the love nor feare of God; and therefore
doe

doe not thinke of yeelding him obedience: neither is it maruell, seeing they know him not: Whom, notwithstanding, no man can loue or feare, before he do know him.

Theoph. What is it then, that mooueth them to do those workes which are so faire in shewe?

Mat. Some, because they be not naturally giuen to the vices which they leaue.

Others, because they be restrained by a slauiish feare of Gods iustice: or else for that they dreame to deserue something at the hands of God.

Others, for feare of lawes: or least they should do any thing, that might hinder their prosperity.

Or else their lustes do strue as the windes, so that the stronger preuaileth ouer the rest, and bridled them from breaking forth into action. As for example, A vaine-glorious man will make a shewe to be liberall; to the end, hee may serue the turne of his ambition. On the other side, a couetous man, that he may spare charges, will set light by honour; although his minde within be set on fire with ambition. A proud man will bee bountifull, to get praise among the common people. She that feareth the reproche of the people, although her mind be defiled with vnchaste lusts, yet outwardly wil be chaste. Finally, the vnfaithfull neuer respect the glorie of God, when they thinke to doe good workes. Which, neuerthelesse, is as it were the very life of good works: so as if it be wanting, they cannot be acceptable to God.

Theoph. If therefore all the goodly deeds, which the vnfaithfull doe, be of no account with God, he shall be in no better case, which carrieth himselfe modestly, & keepeth vnder the lusts of the flesh, than he which passeth away all his life dissolutely.

Mat. No verily, not so. For God rewardeth those workes; yet onely in this life. And oftentimes also he giueth them such things, in respect whereof they did their good deeds: as, health, quiet life, praise, good reporte among men, & such like. Therefore our Sauour Christ saith, that the Scribes and Pharises, in that they prayed and fasted to be praised of men, had their reward.

Mat. 6. 18.

Mat. 11. 22. Moreover, the state of such, as in this life haue behaved themselves modestly, shall be easier in the day of iudgement, than of the other.

Theoph. How can it bee, that God will reward workes which he liketh not? being such, as were not done for his sake.

Mat. Thereby he declareth, how pleasing a thing true obedience is to him; seeing hee rewardeth the very shadow of it. Adde this hereunto, that he hath regard vnto those workes, not as they come from vncleane persons, but from himselfe.

Theoph. In what sense saiest thou, that those workes come from God?

Mat. I say, that God, to the end that order and euen disposing of things may be kept in the world, doth bridle the wickednesse of some, and so maketh them fit to follow vertue. In which respect, we feare not (in common speech) to say, that such men are of a good nature: whereby wee meane, that euen from the beginning of their life, God gaue them some speciall grace. Without which grace, there is no doubt, but that al men be such as they are liuely pictured out by the Apostle. For after he hath said, that there is not one which doth good, straight way he addeth, Their throat is an open sepulcher: they haue vsed their tongues to deceive: the poyson of Aspes is vnder their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitternesse: Their feete are swift to shed blood: Destruction and calamity are in their waies: And the way of peace they haue not knowne: The feare of God is not before their eyes. Which testimonies are gathered, by him, out of sundry places of the old Testament, that he might procure himselfe the more authority and credit, touching this matter.

Theoph. But how could it be, that man, the most excellent creature of all others, should be so much corrupted?

Mat. It was not by his first nature (for he was made after the image of God, that is, like vnto him); but, by originall sinne inherited with *Adam*, by his disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit, infected himselfe and all mankind.

Theoph. Tell me, what that image of God is, wherein thou

Rom. 3. 12.

Psal. 5. 10.

Psal. 10. 7.

Isa. 59. 7.

Psal. 56. 2.

Gen. 1. 27.

Gen. 3. 6.

thou saiest the first man was created, as also that original sinne, wherewith mankind was afterward tainted.

Mat. The image of God consisted in this, that the vnderstanding of man was enlightened with the true knowledge of God, and of the worship due vnto him; and that he was endued with an vpright & good wil, disposed to the obedience of god. Now, it is called the image of God, because in those excellent giftes, man did resemble the wisdom, goodnesse; and power of his creator. But when Adam, by rebellion, fell from this his estate, he was depriued of this image, and withall did put on the image of the diuell. That is to say, hee was spoiled of those notable giftes: in stead wherof came in all manner of vices. As,

Of the image of God.

- 1 The ignorance of God, and of his seruice.
- 2 Wickednesse: for he hated vertue, and loued sinne.
- 3 Impotencie, or lacke of power, to all goodnesse.

And this is that blot of originall sinne: which, beeing in vs like a fire of wickednesse and lust, doth continuallie breath or send forth the fruits and effectes of it; to wit, vngodlinesse and vnrighteousnesse.

Of originall sinne.

Theoph. But, that corruption, it seemeth, should be accounted rather a punishment of Adams sin, then sin it selfe.

Mat. It is, doubtlesse, both a punishment of sin, and the fountaine and well spring of all sins: Neuerthelesse, it is also sinne, and worthy of death, as Paule saith; As by one man, sin came into the world, and death by sinne: so also death went ouer all men, through him in whome we haue all sinned; that is to say, are infected with originall sin.

Rom. 5. 12.

Theoph. But how could Adam make all his posteritie partakers of that infection of sin?

Mat. By generation. For he could not beget any children, but such as were like himselfe: euen as a viper bringeth forth none but vipers.

Now, it is called originall sin, that it may appear we are corrupted, not by any wickednesse taken to vs; but that we do bring with vs an inbred corruption, from our mothers wombe. Which very thing David confesseth of himselfe: Behold I was borne in iniquitie, & in sin hath my mother conceived me.

Psa. 51. 5.

Of the knowledge of Christ: who, hauing satisfied for vs the perfect righteousness of God, hath opened vs a way to his infinite mercy, wherby at length we may come to eternall life.

Theophilus.



Et vs repeat the order of our former speech. Forasmuch as God in no sort can cease to be iust, nor shew any mercy but that which may stand with his iustice; and that man is so corrupt, as hath bene proued by thee out of the Scripture, he can looke for nothing else, but the wrath of God and eternall death.

Mat. God himselfe hath giuen the sentence. For he saith
Deu. 27. 26. by the Prophets; Cursed be euery one, that continueth not in all things, written in the booke of the Law, to do them,
Ezech. 18. 4 And againe; The soule that sinneth, that same shall die. Which things are to be vnderstood, as well of the eternall death, as of the natural; as is declared by the Apostle *Iohn*. But, in Christ, there is remedie offered vs. Therefore the knowledge of him is, in the holy Scriptures, ioyned with the knowledge of God; therby to attaine eternall saluation.

Theoph. Let vs therefore speake of the knowledge of Christ. And, first of all, declare thou those things which concerne his person: and then we shall see, what remedie is brought vs by him, to attaine saluation.

Mat. Concerning the person of Iesus Christ, hee is the eternall Son of God, which tooke vpon him the nature of man, that is to say, was made man in soule and bodie, like to vs in all things, sin onelie excepted. Therefore the nature of God and man are so ioyned together in him, that they make but one person. He hath also but one Father, and one Mother: A Father in respect of his Godhead; & a mother in respect of his manhood, namely, the Virgine *Mary*, of whose substance hee was conceiued, by the power of the holy Ghost.

Theoph. Prooue all these things briefly, out of the word of God.

Mat. Saint *Paule*, speaking of Christ, saith; When the fulnesse of time was come, God sent his Sonne made of a woman. When he saith, that God sent his sonne, hee declar-
Gal. 4. 4.
 reth, that Christ is the second person of the Trinitie; and therefore God; which also elsewhere hee confirmeth in these wordes; *Who is God ouer all, blessed for ever.* But when he addeth, *made of a woman*, he somewhat plainelie
Rom. 9. 5.
 notifieth him to be very man. Which also he affirmeth elsewhere, in these wordes; There is one God, and one Mediatour of God & man, the man Christ Iesus. From the which
1. Tim. 2. 5.
 places, we conclude, that Christ is very God and man. For although each nature hath it owne property remaining distinct to it selfe; yet to the end we may vnderstand, that in Christ they be ioyned together by a most neer bond, so as they make but one person; the Scriptures oftentimes say that of the Diuinity, which agreeth to the humanitie. As, when it is said, that God hath purchased his Church, with
Act. 20. 28
 his own blood. And, contrariwise, those things are said of the humanity, which appertaine to the Diuinity; whereunto that saying of Christ is to be referred; No man ascendeth vp into heauen, but he which came downe from hea-
Iob. 3. 13.
 uen, euen the Son of man which is in heauen.

Theoph. Declare a little more plainly, what thou meanest by this, when thou sayedst, that each nature hath his propertie remaining distinct to it selfe?

Mat. The diuinitie was not changed into the humanitie: for it remaineth eternall, infinite, and impassible. Again, the humanitie was not turned into the Godhead. For, before the death and resurrection of Christ, it was passible; such a nature as might suffer. And before as also after death, it was created and finite; which at one time could not be in diuerse places: for this is contrary to the nature of a true body.

Theoph. This doctrine, againe, is beyond the reach of man.

Mat. It is indeed: as also *Paul* himselfe confirmeth, in these wordes; Without controuersie, great is the mysterie of god-
1. Tim. 3. 16
 lineesse; God manifested in the flesh.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue heard sufficiently of the per-

son of Christ: now let vs speake of the remedy brought by him, to our saluation.

Of the re-
medy
brought by
Christ, to
our salua-
tion.

Mat. He hath fully satisfied the iudgement of God for our sins, and thereby redeemed vs from euerlasting death, and withall made vs capable of the heauenly life; if so be that we be partakers of his gifts.

Theoph. There come three things to my minde, whereof I will aske thee.

1 How Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God, for our finnes.

2 How he maketh vs partakers of the heauenly life.

3 And why it is necessary, that his gifts should be made ours. Now answere to the first.

Mat. To the end this may the more easily be vnderstood, we must remember that, whereof we spake before; namely, that God hath pronounced a curse against all such as transgresse his Law, and that we in two respects haue broken it; to witte, by leauing yndone the good which hee requireth, & by doing the euil which he forbiddeth. Now, Christ hath prouided a remedy for both For, while he was in this earth, he did fully and perfectly fulfill the Law, for vs. Moreouer, he suffered the most shamefull death of the crosse; that he might endure the full punishment due to our sins. By which meanes, having abundantly satisfied the perfect iustice of God for vs, he maketh a way to his mercy, whereby wee may obtaine forgiveness of sins.

And in this sense it is said, That, we were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; That, Christ vpon the tree did beare our finnes in his body: That the blood of Christ, doth cleanse vs from all sinne.

1. Pet. 1. 19.

1. Pet. 2. 24.

1. Ioh. 1. 7.

Theoph. I cannot wonder enough at the exceeding great loue of God toward vs, in that he gaue his most dearly beloved Sonne to the death, for our redemption.

Mat. Adde this, which were his enemies; which also is diligently obserued by the Apostle in these words; Doubtlesse one will scarcely die for a righteous man; for one that is profitable to him; peradventure some man will die But God commēdeth his loue towards vs, in that when we were yet sinners Christ dyed for vs. From whence he draweth

Rom. 5. 7.

draweth this most comfortable conclusion; If, when wee were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Sonne: much more, beeing reconciled, shall wee be saved by his life. *Rom. 5. 10.*

Theoph. But could the iudgement of God be no otherwise satisfied for our sinnes, except his beloued Sonne had taken vpon him our nature, therein to suffer death, the death (I say) of the crosse?

Mat. No. For man, which hath offended the infinite maiestie of God, doth deserue infinite punishment, that is to say, eternall death: which could not be suffered and overcome of any, but of the eternall and infinite Sonne of God. Moreouer, the iustice of God required this, that the same nature, which had sinned, should suffer the punishment of sin. But because God could not suffer, & man could not overcome death, it was necessary that the Redeemer should be very God, & very man, to do both. Wherein also it is to be marked, how neere an attonement God hath entered into with vs, by Christ; in whom the parties at variance be so inseperably ioyned together. Whereby it is come to passe, that God hath turned the fall of man to his great good: for, thereupon hee hath taken occasion to vnite vs more neerely with himselfe. Wherefore, where sinne was increased, there grace hath abounded much more, through Christ. *Rom. 5. 20.*

Theoph. Hitherto we haue hearde sufficientie of the first point; namely, how Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God for our sinnes: now let vs come to the other; which is, by what right we may claime to our selues, everlasting life.

Mat. By a double right, through Christ. First, because for vs he hath fulfilled the whole Law: and God hath promised life to such as fulfill it. Secondly, by the right of inheritance. For, after that Christ is made ours, we are not onely made partakers of his spirituall riches (name his perfect righteousness and obedience, whereby we are accounted just before God) but also of his dignity, to wit, in that with him we are reputed and taken for the children of God. *Leuit. 18. 5.*

Therefore *Paul* saith, If we be sonnes, wee are also *Rom. 8. 17.*
heires

Colos. 1. 12. heires, euen heires of God, & heires together with Christ. And againe, in another place, he calleth eternal life the lot or inheritāce of the Saints: and thus we see that in Christ bee comprised both the rights, by which we lay claime to eternal life for our selues.

Theoph. Therefore, in Christ alone, wee find all thinges necessary to saluation.

Mat. Yea verily. For, in him, there is righteousnesse, and the fulnesse of life: &, without him, man (full of sin) findeth nothing but euerlasting malediction and curse. Therefore **Peter** saith, that, neither is saluation in any other; and that there is no other name vnder heauen giuen among men, whereby we may be saued. For this cause also, the name **Iesus** was giuen him from heauen: by the which, his office is plainly set forth; that is to say, all that which he hath performed for our saluation, and doth stil performe.

Theoph. Go to therefore, tell me what the name **Iesus** What the name **Iesus** signifies. **Christ** signifyeth, as also of whom it was giuen him.

Mat. 1. 21. **Mat.** The name **Iesus** signifyeth **Seniour**: and an Angell gaue it to the Sonne of God; because (as he him selfe expounded it) he should save his people from their sinnes.

Of the name Christ. Concerning the name **Christ**, it is to bee vnderstood, that in times past, in the old Testament, **Christ** was figured or shadowed in the Kings, Prophets, and Priests; who, when they were consecrated, were annointed with oyle, which signified the giftes of the holy Ghost. Now the Redeemer promised was, in Hebrews, called **Messias**: but, in Greeke, it is translated by the word **Christ**, which in Latine signifyeth **Anointed**. By which name, wee are taught, that he is the chiefe

Isa. 1. 33.

Deut. 18. 18

Psal. 110. 4

1. King.

2. Prophet.

3. Priest.

Now, he was annointed not with common visible oyle, but with the grace of the holy Ghost, and that most fully; that from him, as from the head, it might bee poured into each member, namely into all the faithfull: in so much as they also together with him are made Kings, Prophets, & Priests. Now, the name **Christ** (being a Greeke word) hath bene

bin retained in all tongues; because the Apostles themselves wrote in Greek. This therefore is the cause, why the name *Christ* was giuen vnto him, as also why all the faithfull are called Christians; euen because they be partakers of his anointing, and therefore of his kingdome, prophetic, and priesthood. *Rev. 1. 6.*

Theoph. First therefore we must see, how Christ performed the offices of King, Prophet, and Priest: and afterward how he communiceth the same with the faithfull.

Mat. He executed the office of a King, when, by his diuine power, he deliuered vs from the tyrannie of our enemies, the diuell, sin, and death; whom he ouercame, that he might take fro the (into his own hands) the right & interest, which they had in vs, & so subiect vs to his kingdome; which indeed he doth continually exercise in vs, while himself ruleth vs by the scepter of his word, & the power of his spirit. He executed the office of a Prophet, in that he declared all the wil of God vnto vs, by his word; he gaue vs also the Holy Ghost, by whose helpe it might both bee vnderstood of vs, & we yeeld our consents vnto it. This office also he exerciseth euery day, while, by the ministry of the word & working of the Spirit, he causeth vs dayly to profit and go forward in that knowledge. *1. Of King.*

Finally, he executed the office of a Priest, when vpon the Crosse he offered his body & blood for vs to God the Father; that he might be a satisfactio for our sins. The execution of which office hath place also at this day, in that he iureth intercessio for vs. Now, this priesthood of Christ is the truth & fulfilling of all the sacrifices of the old Testament. *3. Of Priest.*

Theoph. Let vs now speake of our kingdome, priesthood, and prophetship.

Mat. We are spiritually kings in Christ; that wee may ouercome the diuell and sin. *Rev. 1. 6.*

Wee are Priests; through him to offer vp an acceptable sacrifice of praise to God. *1. Pet. 2. 9.*

We are Prophets; that, being taught the truth, we may teach others, and open to them the mysteries of the kingdome of Heauen. *Act. 2. 17.*

Theoph. It hath been sufficiendly declared, how Christ hath

hath deliuered vs from condemnation, as also by what meanes he hath made vs fit to attaine eternall life. Now the third point remaineth; namely, why it is necessary, that his giftes should be made ours.

Mat. Because, otherwise, they shall no way helpe vs to the satisfying of the perfect iustice of God: euen as other mens riches auaille nothing to deliuer vs out of debt; except they become ours.

Theoph. How therefore may his giftes become ours,

Of our vnion
with
Christ.

Mat. If we be made one with him. For, by the benefite of that vnion, wee are made partakers of all his spirituall graces, and riches; which are no lesse imputed vnto vs before God, than if they were ours by nature. For this cause the Apostle saith, that we are, by Christ, reconciled in that body of his flesh, through death. By which words of his, he meaneth, that the merite of Christes death pertaineth not to any, but vnto such as be grafted into his body, and are made his members.

Coloss. I. 22

Theoph. Can no man therefore be partaker of Christes giftes, except he be made one with him?

Mat. He cannot: Euen as a woman cannot be partaker of the riches and honor of some great man, except she be ioyned with him in marriage, so that they become one body & one flesh: the members also cannot draw life from the head, if they be not ioyned with it. Therefore, there is no true partaking of Christ, except there be an vnion with him. For this cause, therefore, Christ said to the Capernaits
Ioh. 6. 53. Vnlesse ye eate the flesh of the Sonne of man and drinke his blood, ye shall haue no life in you. In which wordes he plainly sheweth, that we are not partakers of his gifts vnto saluation, except we be as neerely coupled with his humanitie, as meate and drinke are ioyned with our body; which of all others is a most neere vnion. For, meate and drinke, when they are digested in our stomacke, are so turned into our substance, that they cannot bee distinguished or discerned (much lesse separated) from it.

Theoph. This doctrine also is about the capacite of man.

Ephes. 5. 32 *Mat.* It is indeede. Wherefore *Paul*, speaking of it, saith

faith, that it is a greate myserie. Now, if we can neuer so little behold the bodie of the Sun, but our eyes wil dazle: how cā our mindes pearce to that inaccessible light of the diuine maiestie, to conceiue his heauenly mysteries, such as be the points which we haue handled,

- 1 Concerning the Trinitie,
- 2 Of the vnion of the two natures in Christ,
- 3 And of coupling the faithfull, with the humane nature of Christ.

It is therefore our duetie, rather holily to belecue these three fūdamētal points, or beginnings of Christian Religion, thā curiously to examine the by the rule of our reason.

CHAP. IIII.

Of Faith : by the which, we are made one with Christ, and so be partakers of all his gifts.

Theophilus.



hitherto I haue hearde, First, that God, who is perfectly iust, doth no way absolue the guilty : Secondly, that men, which are most miserable sinners, are, before the iustice of God, guiltie of eternall death: Thirdly, that Iesus Christ, by his death, hath satisfied the exact righteousness of God: the which his

death is imputed to vs, that so, being discharged & freed frō cōdemnation, we may be partakers of euerlasting life; if so be that we be vnited with him. It remaineth therefore that I vnderstand, how we are vnited (or, made one) with Christ.

Mat. By faith : as hee himselte testifieth, in the prayer which he made to God for all the faithful, in these words; Father, I pray thee for such as shal beleue in me, that they all may be one; as thou (ō Father) art in mee, and I in thee, that they also may be one in vs.

Ioh. 17. 20.

Wherunto also that saying of *Paul* is to be referred, that Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith. And hereupon it is, that these sentences be often repeated in the Scriptures; *Ephes. 3. 17*

1 That

Act. 13. 39.

1 That euery one, which beleueth in him, is absolved and discharged.

Ioh. 1. 12.

2 Is made the childe of God.

Ioh. 3. 16.

3 Doth not perish; but hath euerlasting life.

In which places, those things bee attributed to faith, which we receiue of Christ alone; to the end wee may vnderstand, that both he and his gifts are communicated to vs by faith.

Of iustification.

Theoph. Thou hast touched a little concerning the righteousness of faith: which I desire to haue declared by thee; somewhat more at large. For, I perceiue that *Paule* oftentimes speaketh of it.

Mat. To bee iustified before God, is to be accompted iust, that is to say, without blot, and vnreprocheable. Now *Paule* doth often handle this point: because it is one of the speciall grounds of our faith. For no man can please God, but he that is iustified.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because that as God is perfectly iust and holy, so he loueth holinesse & iustice; but, contrariwise, hee hateth vnrighteousnesse. And therefore we can haue no fellowship with him, to be partakers of his heauely glory, except we be perfectly righteous. Therefore he saith, that no vn-cleane thing shall enter into the holy Citie.

Rom. 14. 27.

Theoph. How then are we iustified, or made righteous, before God?

Mat. In the Scriptures, there be two kinds of righteousness set forth to vs: which also doe very much differ, the one from the other. These are

- 1 The righteousness of the law, and
- 2 The righteousness of faith.

But the holy Scriptures do teach vs, that we cannot be iustified by the former, which is of the Law: to the end we might fly to the other, which is of faith.

Theoph. Declare vnto me, wherein both these kinds of righteousness do stand, as also what the difference is betwene them.

Mat. The righteousness of the law is the perfect fulfilling of the law. For, if we did fully and perfectly fulfill

fulfill whatsoeuer that commaundeth, wee should by our workes be iust before God; neither should we neede anie other righteousness. But, the Apostle, in diuerse places sheweth, that this cannot be; forasmuch as all men be sinners, & therefore vnrighteous (which shal not be omitted by vs, when we speake of workes): and therefore he concludeth, that we are iustified by faith.

Rom. 3. 20.
Gal. 3. 11.

But, the righteousness of faith is the righteousness of Iesus Christ: which, by faith, is freely imputed vnto vs of God. By these things thou maist vnderstand, what the difference is betwixt the righteousness of the law, and the righteousness of faith.

1 The Law requireth it of our selues; but faith calleth vs from our selues, to seeke for it in Christ; in whom onely it is, and that indeed perfectly.

2 Againe, the Law requireth vs to obserue and doe all that it commandeth: otherwise it threatneth the curse. But faith requireth this one thing, namely that we belecue; & promisseth all kind of blessings to such as beleue.

3 Finally, the righteousness of the Law, comming from our selues would set vp merit, and put away grace. Contrariwise, the righteousness of Faith, which is from God, taketh away merit, and setteth vp grace.

Theoph. Now I vnderstand, wherein both these righteousnesses consist, and in what things the one differeth from the other. But I thinke it may be gathered of your words, that we are not properly iustified by faith; but, by the merit of Christ.

Mat. Thou gatherest rightly. For, if faith should iustifie by any inward vertue it hath, seeing that our faith is alwaies weake and imperfect, our righteousness would bee imperfect. Faith therefore is as it were an instrument wherewith we take hold vpon our perfect righteousness, which is in Christ: which *Paul* plainly expresth in these words; All haue sinned, & are deprived of the glory of God: but are iustified freely, that is to say, by his grace, by the redemption made in Iesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a reconciliation, through faith in his blood.

Rom. 3. 23.
24. 25.

1 First, the Apostle witnesseth, that all men bee vn-
right.

righteous; forasmuch as all men haue sinned, and therefore be depriued of the fauour of God.

2 Then he teacheth vs, that the righteousness, by the which we are iustified before God, hath the foundation in the onely merit of Christs death, wherewith God is pacified; so as he becommeth mercifull & fauorable vnto vs.

3 To conclude, he sheweth, that, freely by faith, we are made partakers of that righteousness of Christ, How often soeuer therefore this manner of speech is vsed by the Apostle, *We are iustified by faith*; he vnderstandeth, that this is done by the most perfect righteousness, obedience, and satisfaction of Iesus Christ: which gifts are then imputed to vs, when we are by faith made one with him.

Theoph. It followeth then, that all our righteousness is onely in imputation.

Mat. Yeatruely, For it is necessarie, to the end we may be accounted righteous before God, that our vnrighteousness be not imputed vnto vs, & that Christs righteousness be imputed. Now, Christ performeth all these. The imputation of whose giftes causeth that our sinnes be not laid to our charge, forasmuch as by the benefit of that imputation they be couered and remooued out of the sight of God; although he knowe euery one of them, so as he can tell their very number. Concerning these things, therefore, the case standeth as it doth with the blacknes of a coale set on fire: which blacknesse we know to be in the coale; although we see it not with our eyes.

Theoph. These things call, to my remembrance, that *Psal. 32. 1.* excellent saying of *Dauid*; Blessed are they whose iniquities be forgiven, and whose sinnes be couered. Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth not sinne. But, seeing our righteousness and all our saluation dependeth vpon faith in Christ, tell me what faith is.

Mat. Faith in Christ is a certaine speciall assurance, by the which we know that we are made partakers of the merit of the death & resurrection of Christ; so, as that it becometh satisfactio for vs, & forgiveness of all our sins: * which indeed is the foundation of the Christian faith. Whereupon it is, that they be indifferently vsed. For sometime the Scripture
saith,

Gal. 2. 16.

Ioh. 6. 47.

* See page

25.

faith, that we are iustified by faith in Christ: and sometime it ascribeth it simply to faith.

Rom. 3. 25.
26.

Theoph. What then is faith?

Ephe. 2. 8.
Of faith.

Mat. The word *Faith* hath many significations. For sometimes it is as much, as a promise to performe somewhat: thereupon, to keepe faith is the same with standing to a mans promise. Herunto may be referred the saying of *Paule*, God is faithfull; as if he had said, that, God (which men doe often) neuer faileth of his promise. Sometimes also it is taken for the gift to worke miracles; as, when *Paul* saith, that if he had all faith, so as he could remooue mountains, yet if he had not loue, hee were nothing. Besides, it signifieth the wholesom doctrine of godlinesse. As, when *Paule* chargeth *Titus*; Rebuke them, that they may be sound in the faith. In which sense, he is commonly said, to be in a wrong faith, which erreth from the purity of doctrine. But, the most proper signification of the word *Faith*, is that whereof we speake in this place, and whereof there is so often mention in the scriptures, when in many places we are said to be iustified and saued by faith; and, that without faith no man can please God. To concludethen, faith is to vs a Certificat that we are beloued of God.

1.
2.
1. Cor. 13. 2.
3.
Tit. 1. 13.

Theoph. * But why saidst thou, at the beginning, that faith in Christ is the foundation of faith it selfe.

4.
Gal. 3. 16.
Ephe. 2. 8.
Heb. 11. 6.

Mat. Because we cannot certainly determine, that God will be mercifull to vs, except wee doe first knowe that Christ by his death hath made satisfaction to God for our sinnes, and reconciled him vnto vs. Therefore *Peter* saith, that through Christ we beleue in God, which raised him from the dead, and gaue him glory; that our faith and hope might be in God. From whence it is easie to gather, that Christ is the onely foundation of our faith, which the holy Ghost hath ingrauen in our harts.

* See page
24. *

And this is, as it were, the summe of the Christian faith, which commonly is called the Apostles Creede; I beleue in God the father almightie &c.

1. Pet. 1. 21

The exposition of the Apostles Creede.

Theoph. Let vs therefore speake of this confession of the faith which I desire thee to expound, to me, full & whole.

But before I come to the parts of it, I will propound three things, wherein I desire to be satisfied of thee.

1. First, why it is called the Apostles Creede.

2. Secondly, seeing the doctrine, which is contained in it, generally belongeth to all the faithfull, why wee say, I belecue in God, not we belecue in God.

3. Thirdly, what properly is it to belecue in God.

Mat. The word (*Symbolum*) which in English sometimes we translate *Creede*, in this place signifieth as it were the gathering together of many parts into one. Which tearme doth not vnfitly agree to this cōfession of the faith: which, we see, is made of many articles.

Now, it is called the Apostles Creede, because it containeth as it were a brieife summe of all the Apostolicall doctrine, written in the bookes of the olde and new Testament.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other point, wherof I doubted. Why do we say rather, I belecue in God, then we belecue? seeing this doctrine is generall, and all Christians are bound to belecue it.

1. *Mat.* That is, for two causes. First, because euery man can giue testimony of his owne faith: but of another mans faith he cannot.

2. Secondly, that we might vnderstand, that these articles were not written so much to teach vs, as that by them we might be built vp to saluation. For, otherwise, they should profit vs no more, then if a sick man saw a medicine hauing vertue to driue away a malady, the working wherof he knew: and yet did neglect to take it.

But, wee professe that applying of it to our selues, when euery of vs saith, I belecue.

Theo. As farre as I perceiue, there is no litle likenesse betweene the sicknesse of the body and the sicknesse of the minde; and againe betweene the means of attaining the health of the one and of the other.

Mat. Nay rather, there is very great likenesse. For, as in the sicknesse of the body, there be three degrees to the obtaining of health, that is to say, the

1. Knowledge of the sicknesse,

2. The

2. The knowledge of the remedie,

3. And the applying of it:

So also it fareth with our spirituall sicknesse, sinne. For whosoever hath acknowledged that sicknesse, hath attained the first degree of health. If he knowe the remedie, which is Christ, he is in the second. But all this is to no purpose, except the remedy be applied by faith.

Theoph. Let vs therefore come to the third. What is it properly to beleue in God?

Mat. When we speake of God, we say that we beleue, three manner of waies.

1. First, to beleue one God.

To beleue
what it is.

2. Secondly, to beleue God.

3. Thirdly, to beleue in God.

Whereof the two first are the degrees, by which at length we come to the third.

To beleue one God, is as much to say, thou beleuest that there is one God.

To beleue God, is to beleue that God is true concerning his promises declared in his word.

To beleue in God, is, according to those promises, to put thy whole trust and hope in God: and this belongeth to the faithfull onely; who, by true faith, apply those promises to themselves.

Theoph. Thou dost then account them infidels, that stand still in the first or second degree.

Who be infidels.

Mat. I doe indeede. For they beleue no more, then the diuels themselves doe.

Theo. Thou hast satisfied me. We are therefore to come to the parts of the Creede.

Mat. They are foure.

The partes
of the Creed

1. Of faith in God the Father.

2. Of faith in his Sonne, Iesus Christ.

3. Of faith in the holy Ghost.

4. Concerning the Church.

Why our
faith is
referred to
each person
by it selfe

To. But why is our faith distinctly referred to euery person by it selfe? seeing that it is one God, in whom we beleue.

Mat. That our faith may be the better strengthened: which is then done, when wee consider distinctly; & apart;

each

each

each person according to his distinct property, hath wrought in our saluation. Notwithstanding, our faith is neuer a whit the lesse referred to one God.

Theoph. How?

Mat. For it is all one, as if a man should say, I put all my hope and trust in one God, of whose loue I cannot doubt, at all. For, whereas he is distinguished into three persons, euery one of them confirmeth in me the assurance of that loue. For, the Father hath both created me by his omnipotency, and doth also guide me by his mercifull providence. The Sonne hath redeemed me by his death, reconciled me to God the Father, and euen yet maketh intercession to him for me. The holy Ghost, by his diuine power, hath sanctified me, and ioyned me with Christ and his Church; that with it I might bee made partaker of all his gifts, vntill he bring me euen to eternall life.

The first part of the Apostles Creede: which is, of faith in God the Father.

Theoph. In this exposition of the Creede, which thou hast euen now made, there be some few things whereof I will aske thee. I will keepe the order of the partes, in propounding my questions.

Whether
the father
only created vs.

1.
2.

I will therefore begin with God the Father: by whose gracious providence, thou saidst that we are ruled. First, I demand therefore, whether the Father only created vs.

Secondly, why thou makest here mention of his mercifull providence; whereof there is no one word in the Creede. Now answer me to the first.

Mat. Those three persons (forasmuch as they haue all one essence, namely the Godhead; and therefore are one God) do nothing apart or asunder one from the other. Therefore, both in our creation, redemption, and sanctification, euery one of the persons wrought according to their distinct property.

Theoph. In those three diuine workes, shew mee this distinctly.

Mat. Concerning the creation, the Scripture doth teach

teach vs, that the Father made all things by his word, that P *sal. 33. 6.*
is to say, by his Sonne, and by his Spirite. Concerning our
redemption, the Father, saith Christ, so loued the world, *Ioan. 3. 16.*
that he gaue his onely begotten Son to the death, for our
redemption; which death the Sonne suffered, by the power
of the holy Ghost. The same also is to bee vnderstood of *Heb. 9. 14.*
our sanctification; whereof the Father is, as it were the ori-
ginall fountain. For, Christ, praying for the faithfull, saith; *Ioh. 17. 17.*
Father, sanctifie them. The matter of our sanctification is in *19.*
the Sonne. For he addeth; I sanctifie my selfe, that they also
may be sanctified. And the holy Ghost is, as it were, a con-
duit, through the which that holinesse floweth from Christ
who is the head, into vs that are his members.

Theoph. How commeth it to passe then, that the Scrip-
ture ascribeth creation to the Father, redemption to the V Why the
Sonne, and sanctification to the holy Ghost? Scripture
ascribeth
creation to
the Father,
redemption
to the son,
sanctificatio
to the holie
Ghost.

Mat. It is in respect of our rudenesse: because the worke
of the Father is more manifest and euident in the creati-
on, the worke of the Sonne in the redemption, and the
worke of the holy Ghost in the sanctification. For, in the
creatio, the Scripture setteth the Father before vs, as some
mightie king commanding.

In the redemption, it setteth foorth the Sonne: who
manifested himselfe vnto men, in the flesh, wherein he suf-
fered death for vs, *Gen. 1.*
Philip. 2. 7.

In the sanctification, it setteth foorth the holy Ghost:
who putteth foorth his diuine vertue and force, whereby
he dwelleth in vs. Hecce it is, that the Father is called *Crea-*
tor; the Sonne *our Lord*, that is to say, redeemer; and the
Spirit *holie*; to the ende we may vnderstand, that wee are
sanctified of it. *Tit. 3. 6.*
1. Cor. 6. 19
Act. 4. 24.
Rom. 7. 25.
1. Cor. 12. 3.

Theoph. Wherefore sayest thou, that, when the Sonne is
called our Lord, it is all one as if a man did call him re-
deemer? *How Lord*
signifieth
redeemer.

Mat. Because he hath gotten this dominion or Lord-
ship, by his redeeming of vs. For thereby he hath deliuered
vs from the tyranny of the Diuell, and subiected vs to his
owne kingdome.

Theoph. I had thought, that the holy Ghost had beene
C 3 therefore

therefore called holy, to note the holiness wherewith hee is indued.

Why the
holy Ghost
is called
holy.

Mat. Surely, in that sense, there is no more cause to call him holy, then the Father, or the Son; who, it is certaine, are also holy: But he is called holy, in respect of the holiness, which he worketh in vs.

Theoph. Touching the first part, I require no more. I come therefore to the other. Wherefore makest thou mention of the gracious providence of God? whereof, the confession of our faith maketh no mention.

Of the pro-
vidence of
God toward
the faithful.

Mat. The providence of God is ioyned to the creation with so neere a band, that, of the one, the other doth necessarily follow. For it is altogether contrary to the nature of God, to neglect all his creatures after he hath once made them; especially when we speake of the elect, for whose salvation he deliuered his onely begotten Son, to death. Albeit therefore God do guide all things by his providence, as hath bin immediatly afore declared of vs: yet, after a speciall manner he looketh vpon the faithful, to be at hand for the relief of their wants, & to deliuer them from dangers; whom whosoever toucheth, toucheth the apple of his own eye. Now, all these things are not darkely comprehended in the article, which is concerning Faith in God the Father.

Zach. 2. 8.

Theoph. Goe to therefore, goe on with euery particular.

I beleue in
God the
father.

Mat. When we call God father, it is first no doubt in respect of Christ, who is the onely begotten Sonne. Notwithstanding, from thence we gather, that he is a father to vs, whom through him, hee hath adopted and taken for his children. Therefore, the name of father doth secretly containe, in it, the loue of God toward vs. But he is called omnipotent, not so much that we may vnderstand hee is able to do whatsoeuer he will; as that we may know he not onely willet well to vs, but can also do what he willet; so as nothing at all can let him from being assistant to vs.

Omnipo-
tent.

Maker of
heauen and
earth.

Finally, he is said to be the maker of Heauen and Earth; not onely to teach vs, that all things in heauen and earth were made by him; but also to make it appeare to vs, that he hath all things in his power, that they may be aiding to

Act. 4. 24.

vs, if neede be; and that he doth so bridle the diuel, and all our

our enemies, that they cannot hurt vs. Therefore the faithfull do not, in vaine, put their trust in God; but with *David* may say, The Lord is with me: I will not feare what *Psal. 116. 4.* man can doe to me.

Although I should walke in the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no ill, because thou art with me. *Psal. 13. 4.*

Theoph. But oftentimes it falleth out, that the faithfull are most cruelly handled by their enemies.

Mat. That neuer commeth to passe, vnlesse god wil it: without whome, nor one haire can bee pluckt from vs. *Mat. 10. 30* Whereby it is, that he who loueth vs (for he is our father, and is omnipotent) doth not suffer them to do it, but for our great good.

Theoph. Were it not more fit, if we said (according to the common receiued opinion) that this commeth to passe onely by Gods sufferance, and not by his will?

Mat. No man can separate the sufferance of God from his will, but he doth manifest iniurie to God, and taketh from vs a great part of our comfort.

Theoph. Why for

Mat. Because, thereby, God should bee made idle, and all occasion of putting our trust in him should be taken away. And indeede the state of the faithfull were most miserable, if they lay open to the assaunkes of raging Sathan and to the bloudie lust of the vngodly. But the holy Scriptures teach vs far otherwise; that the deuill could do nothing to *Iob*, before he had obtained leaue of God: also that hee could not enter into the swine, but when Christ bade him: and that the wicked be in the hand of the Lord: that *Sennacherib*, theemie of Gods people, was the rod of Gods wrath, and the staffe of his hand. *Iob. 1. 12.* *Mat. 8. 31.* *Psal. 17. 14* *Isay. 10. 5.*

Theoph. But how can it bee, that euill should be committed by the will and appointment of God, and yet hee allow it not? Is not this altogether vnworthie of God? Moreover, if that were true, the wicked were not to bee blamed: seeing that, when they do euill, they execute the will of God.

Mat. Although euill cannot bee committed, without the will and appointment of God; yet he neither willet

Psal. 5. 3.

Act. 2. 23.

nor alloweth it, so far forth as it is euill; but rather abhorreth it as cleane contrarie to his nature: But the good, which by his marvellous wisdom he bringeth out of those euils, he both willet and alloweth. Which may be seen in the very death of Christ: whom Peter affirmeth to haue bene deliuered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; (out of the which hee brought the saluation of the world) although he neither allowed the treason of *Iudas*, nor the wicked enuie of the Iewes.

From hence it is, that albeit the wicked doe the will of God, yet are they no whit the lesse guiltie before him. For they haue no purpose to doe it.

Theoph. Therefore, vnlesse I bee deceiued, the wicked doe not the will of God: but God doeth his will by the wicked.

Mat. Thou iudgest rightly. For the purpose of the wicked, in doing the will of God, is far vnlike the purpose of God himselfe. Which *Isaiah* himselfe doth plainelie note, speaking of *Sennacherib*. For, after he had affirmed, that he was the rod of Gods wrath, & the staffe of his hand, whom he sent to a dissembling nation, whom also he would commaund to robbe, and to take the spoile of the people whom the Lord was angry with, straight way he addeth; But hee thinketh not so, neither will his heart esteeme it so. For he imagineth to root out, and to cut off not a few nations.

Theoph. God therefore is a marueilous workman; who can vse any instrument to the performing of his worke.

Mat. Yea indeede: he vseth both good and euill, to his glorie; but in farre vnlike respects. For, he guideth the affections of the former, namely of the Angels and of the faithfull, by his holy spirit: so as the worke, which he doth by the, is altogether good. But the other, that is to say the diuell and the wicked, are egged forward by their own malice: and so they do altogether vary from God; who neuer thelesse, by his wonderfull wisdom, doth so gouern their actions, that in the end they fall out to his glory.

Theoph. This doctrine agreeth excellentlie with that which I haue heard of thee more then once; namely, that the sinnes of the wicked be from themselues: but, while

as sinning they do this or that thing, that is of God.

Mat. Thou gatherest well. For, so doth God exercise his iudgements. For, he punisheth sin with another sinne; and, for the most part, with a sinne of the same kinde: as, murder with murder, theft with theft; according to the vchangeable sentence pronounced by himselfe; Whosoever sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed. *Gen. 9. 6.* Woe to thee, that spoilest: when thou hast made an end of spoyling, thou shalt be spoiled. *Isay. 33. 1.*

Theoph. But, oftentimes it falleth out that the wicked prosper, so as they bee free from all aduersitie, yea from deserued punishments; and the godly euery where be pressed downe with afflictions.

Mat. God punisheth some sins in this world; that both his providence and iustice may appeare: for else he might seeme not to care what men did. And, againe, he leaueth many things unpunished; that we may vnderstand, there is another life after this, wherein hee will most seuerely reuenge all the sinnes of men, yea with the grieuousnesse of their punishment equall the long patience wherewith hee endured them, & whereby through innumerable benefites he allured them to repentance.

But, concerning the afflictions of the godly, when God sendeth them, he hath regard both to his owne glorie, and to our saluation. For, according to the saying of the Apostle, All things worke together for the best, to them that loue God. I omit, that it may be there are many hypocrits among the faithfull: whose sins God doth worthily punish. *Rom. 8. 28.*

Theoph. But, what profite may the faithfull reape by their afflictions? *The profite gotten by afflictions.*

Mat. What profite? Not one kind, but many: which, for the helpe of memorie, I will bring into 6. heads or chiefe

Theoph. Declare the first. *(points.)*

Mat. By them, God bringeth vs to humilitie: while, by our owne experience, he prooueth, that whatsoeuer goodly matter we wondred at in our selues is nothing. From hence was that speech of *Dauid*; With rebukes thou chastisest man for iniquitie, and makest his beauty to consume as a moth: surely euery man is vanitie. *1. Humility. Psal. 39. 11*

Theoph.

Theoph. What is the cause, that God doth so humble vs?

Mat. 1. First, that all glory and praise may be giuen vnto him alone.

2. Secondly, that we may put awaie that vaine confidence, which naturally sticketh within vs; and so flie to him alone, and put our trust in him.

1. Pet. 5. 5. 3. Last of all, that we may be the better prepared to receiue his giftes: which he giueth not but to the humble.

Theoph. Come now to the second head.

*2. Repen-
tance.*

Mat. By afflictions, God calleth vs to true repentance. For, when he correcteth our sinnes, hee doth it to make vs vnderstand, how much he detesteth sinne; (wherein we do not a little flatter our selues) that so also wee might detest it.

And withall he tames the rebellion of our flesh, (as husbandmen are wont to tame their vnbroken or stubborne cattell, with the plough) & dayly more and more teacheth vs obedience. From hence is it, that *David* saith, It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learne thy statutes.

Psal. 119. 71

Theoph. This bringeth that to my remembrance, which before this tunc I haue heard of thee; namely, that God by afflictions doth correct our vices, that he may allure vs vnto vertue.

Mat. Thou sayest well. For euen as iron, if it bee not occupied, is eaten with rust; and the earth, vnlesse it bee tilled, bringeth forth nothing but briars and brambles: So also the godly, if they be not exercised with diuerse afflictions, doe as it were fall asleepe in their pleasures, and become dull and slowe to Gods seruice; so as, in steede of fruites becomming repentance, they bring forth nothing but vanity and folly. Therefore the Apostle saith, to the Hebrewes; Euery affliction for the present time seemeth not ioyous, but grieuous: but, afterwards, it yeeldeth the quiet fruite of righteousness, to them that are thereby exercised.

Heb. 12. 11

Theoph. It is now time that we proceed to the 3. head.

Mat. By afflictions God worketh this in vs, that we learne to pittie such as bee in distresse. For no man hath com-

compassion or suffereth with another, who himselfe hath not suffered before. By this argument, the Apostle to the Hebrewes prooueth, that Christ will haue compassion vpon our afflictions, and that he will be our aduocate with his Father. These be his words; We haue not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but such a one, as was in all things tempted in like sort; yet without sinne.

Theoph. Go forward; declare vnto me the fourth head.

Mat. By afflictions, the Lord shaketh off our drousinesse, and doth stir vs vp to earnest praier: Insomuch as not without good cause, afflictions be called the schoole of the holy Ghost, where we are taught to pray aright. The Lord also commandeth vs to pray in the time of trouble; and promisseth that we shall be heard. Call vpon me in the time of thy trouble, and I will deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. Which all the faithfull do often prooue true in their owne experience. For, as the same Prophet saith; The Lord is neere those that be broken in heart, and will saue the contrite in spirit.

Theoph. That is a most excellent vse of afflictions. Now declare the fift.

Mat. By them the Lord maketh our faith euident, that we may be assured of it, and strengthened in it. For, *Peter* saith; that, it is tried no otherwise, than gold is tried in a furnace of fire; which is a most fit similitude. For, as fire is to the baser things, which either cosumeth them (as, wood and straw) or else hardneth them (as, it doth clay); but precious things (such as be gold and siluer) it melteth & clenseth; so there be diuers effects of afflictions, according to the variety of the persons to whom they be sent. For, they do either consume the wicked through impatience, or else they harden them through despaire.

1. On the other side, they soften the hearts of the godly, to make them call vpon God.

2. They cleanse their harts: forasmuch as, by afflictions, our concupiscence is mortified.

3. Finally, they trie our faith. For, while the Lord doth temper the bitterness of them with his loue and gentle-

3. Pitying of others.

Hebr. 4. 15.

4. Prayer.

Psal. 50. 15

Psal. 34. 19

5. Trial of our faith.

1. Pet. 1. 17

gentlenesse, he causeth vs to take them patiently, and to fashion our selues to his most holy will: and, by this means, our faith is manifested. Hereupon *Iames* calleth afflictions, by the name of temptation or triall; Blessed is the man, which endureth temptation. For when he hath been tried, he shall receiue the crowne of life. Whereunto also that is to be referred, which is spoken of *Paule*; that, affliction bringeth forth patience, patience experience, and experience hope. For, this the Apostle meaneth, that God, by the comfort which he giueth vs in afflictions, prooueth to vs by experience the truth of his promises: wherethrough, from thenceforth we are confirmed in the hope of eternall life.

Iames II. 2

Rom. 5. 3.

Theoph. Indeede, the former foure vses of afflictions are most excellent; and this fift is nothing inferiour: hasten therefore vnto the last.

6. The re-
nouncing of
the world,
& desire of
eternal life.

Mat. By afflictions, God will call our minds away from these earthly things; that wee may earnestly desire the life to come. For, the *Israëlites*, if they had not been ill intreated both in *Ægypt* and in the wildernesse, would neuer haue thoroughly thought vpon going to the land of *Canaan*; which was a figure of the heavenly inheritance. Therefore God doth as a carefull nurse; who, when thee should weane the child, layeth some bitter thing vpon the teat, to cause the child to hate and abhorre it.

Heb. 12. 5.
6. 7. 8.

Thou hast now shewed, how many wayes afflictions bee necessarie for vs. Thou seest therefore that wee are not without cause warned, by the Apostle, to beare them patiently, as sent from God our Father, when hee saith; My sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord: neither faint when thou art corrected of him. For, whome the Lord loueth he chastiseth, and scourgeth euery sonne whome he receiueh. If yee endure chastening, God offereth himselfe to yee as to sonnes. (For what sonne is there whom the father chasteneth not?) But if yee bee without chastening, whereof they al be partakers, verily yee are bastards, and not sons. Afterwards he addeth, we had the fathers of our bodies chastisers of vs, & we did the reuerence: should we not much more be in subiection to the father of spirits,

that we may liue? For they,indeede, for a few daies chasticed vs, after their owne pleasure; but he, for our profit; that we might be partakers of his holinesse.

Theoph. There is no cause, then, why the faithful should in this world looke for prosperity onely.

Mat. True: vnlesse they will deceiue themselves. For, otherwise, it were necessary, that

For the
godly to be
without af-
flictions, it is
impossible.

1. The diuell should be without enuie,
2. The world without malice,
3. And we our selues without sinne.

But, the Diuell will alwaies burne in enuie against the faithfull: the world, with malice and mad hatred: and our sinnes will minister sufficient matter to God (who, neuerthelesse, euen therein hath care of our saluation) to giue the raines to those our enemies, to molest and trouble vs. Wherefore (according to the saying of the Apostle) let all such, as desire to liue godly in Christ Iesus, make account, that they shall suffer persecutions. Adde hereunto, that, prosperity is not alwaies profitable for vs: nay, oftentimes it hurteth vs.

2. Tim. 3. 12

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because many times it hindereth our saluation. For it bringeth forth fruits, altogether contrary to those which we reckned vp euen now.

Hurt, grow-
ing of prof-
perity.

1. For, it maketh vs proud and insolent; & keepeth vs from the knowledge of our sinnes.
2. It stirreth vs vp to serue our owne wicked lusts; and it is to them as nourishment or fuell, wherewith they are more and more set on fire.
3. It maketh vs negligent in prayer; and, as it were, quencheth in vs the desire to pray.
4. It prouoketh vs to impatience, and wrath; and maketh vs void of the affection of mercy.

1. Pride.

5. Finally, it maketh vs drunken with the loue of our selues and of the world; and draweth vs away from meditation on the heauenly life. Therefore, not without cause, the Scripture testifieth, that through many afflictions wee must enter into the kingdome of God. And these are, in many places of the Bible, called strikings; to the end

Act. 14. 22

1. Co. 10. 13

Psal. 30. 5.

Six special
points, for
consolation
in aduersity.

end we might vnderstand them to be, as it were, certaine spirituall medicines, which are diuersly ministred to diuers persons, (by God himselfe, the best spirituall Physitian) according to the quality of our sicknesse, & necessity. Notwithstanding, he dealeth alwaies so gently with vs, that he suffereth vs not to be tempted, aboue that we are able to beare. For, while he chastiseth vs with the one hād, he lifeth vs vp with the other, & causeth the issue of the affliction to be alwaies happier: & thus he maketh prooffe, to vs, of his bounty & kindnesse in aduersity, aswell as in prosperity. For, sometimes he tempereth them both together, or else sendeth them by turnes; lest we shoud bee too much either puffed vp with prosperitie, or throwne down with aduersity. Hereupon, the Prophet saith; Weeping may abide in the euening: but ioy commeth in the morning. Yea rather, he vseth this variety and change, that we may so much the more acknowledge what the sweetnesse of prosperity is, and be therefore more earnestly bent to yeeld him thanks. For, as it is in the prouerbe, *He is vnworthy of the sweete, that neuer tasted the soure.*

Theoph. Hitherto thou hast declared certaine verie excellent chiefe points concerning afflictions: which if they bee earnestly fixed in our mindes, they wil bring no smal cōfort, nor a little stirre vs vp to patience. Now these, vnlesse I be deceiued, are

1 First, that afflictions come not to vs, but by the wil of God.

2 That they be sent to vs from God, to our good.

3 That God will assist vs to the patient bearing of them.

4 That God promisseth vs a blessed issue, yea at length a full deliuerance.

5 Finally, that, by meanes of them, prosperity is made, after a sort, more pleasant and delectable.

6 *Mat.* Thou passest ouer the chiefe point; namely, that fatherly loue of God which he putteth in practise euen then when hee doth chastice vs. For, hee alwaies dealeth mercifully and graciously with vs, in the verie afflictions, Which thing *Danid* witnesseth, in these words;

The

The Lord is mercifull and gentle, slow in wrath, and a-
 boundant in kindnesse. He is not wont to chide alwaies: *Psal. 103, 8.*
 neither will he keepe his wrath for euermore. He hath not
 dealt with vs according to our sinnes: neither hath he re-
 warded vs, according to our iniquities. For, according to
 the height of the heauens aboue the earth, so exceeding
 is his kindnesse towards them that feare him. As farre as
 the East is from the West, so farre hath he remooued our
 sinnes from vs. As a father hath compassion on his chil-
 dre: so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him.
 For, he knoweth wherof we be made: he remembreth that
 we are but dust.

Theoph. Why callest thou this the chiefeft point?

Mat. Because, vntlesse we fix our eyes vpon that loue of
 God in our afflictions, all other comfort will be to no pur-
 pose. Contrariwise, if this goe before, and they (which thou
 erewhile recitedst) do follow, eyther I am greatly decei-
 ued, or there is no afflictio so hard which a faithfull mā may
 not bee able to ouercome; especially if it bee to bee
 suffered, for the testimonie of the truth of the Gospel.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. There may fve causes be alleaged, beside those
 which thou hast heard already.

Theoph. My hart longeth to heare them.

Mat. The first is this; that, by afflictions for righteous-
 nesse sake, the Lord vouchsafeth vs the honor to be Mar-
 tyrs, that is to say, witnesses of his truth. And so he tur-
 neth the punishment ioyned with shame, which we haue
 deserued, into most glorious afflictions. Whereupon, *Peter* *Afflictions for righte-
 ousnesse.*
 speaking of them, said; that, it is better, if so the wil of God
 be, that doing well we should be punished, then doing
 euill. *1. Pet. 3, 17.*

2. The other is, that by them we are made like not
 onely to the holy Patriarkes, Prophets, Apostles, and
 other Martyrs, which liued before our times: but also to
 Christ himselte, who hath set himselte before vs as a
 patterne of them, to be imitated; with whome (saith the *Rom. 8, 17.*
 Apostle) we shall not otherwise bee glorified, except wee *2. Tim. 2, 12.*
 suffer with him.

3. The

Tertul. in
apol. adu.
gent.

3 The third is, because the glory of God, which ought to be farre dearer to vs then our owne life, is this way not a little furthered. For, it oftentimes cometh to passe, that the very enemies of the Christian truth be called to the knowledge of Christ, and the weake confirmed in it, by our constancy, & open confession of Gods name. Therefore it was wel said of one of the ancient fathers, that, The bloud of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church.

1. Pet. 4. 14.
2. Cor. 1. 5.

4 The fourth is, that, while we be made partakers of Christs sufferings, the spirit of God resteth vpon vs, wherewith we are maruellously comforted. For, as the sufferings of Christ abound in vs: so our comfort aboundeth, thorough Christ.

Mat. 5. 12
Luk. 6. 23.
2. Cor. 4. 17.

5 The fift is, because our reward is great in heauen, as Christ himselfe witnesseth. Yea, rather he willet vs to reioyce, and to leape for ioy, in the middelt of afflictions. Paule also saith the same, in these words; The momentany lightnesse of our affliction procureth vs a farre more excellent and an eternall weight of glory; while we looke not on things which are seen, but on things which are not seene. For, the things, which are seene, are temporal: but the things which are not seene, are eternall, Therefore we haue no occasion of heauinesse giuen vs, by suffering in this sort: may rather we ought to take matter of exceeding comfort and ioy, as of the greatest good which is wont to be giuen of God, and as of a speciall gift which hee giueth not but to his elect, and most dearly beloued children.

Phil 1. 29.

Gal. 6. 14.

For Paul teacheth, that it is giuen vs not onely to beleue in Christ, but also to suffer for him. In another place also the same Apostle saith of himselfe; God forbid that I should boast in any thing, saue the Crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ: whereby the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.

*The second part of the Apostles Creede: which
is, of faith in Christ.*

Theoph. Wee haue spoken largely enough of the first part of the Creede: the matter therefore requireth that

we

we come to the second, which is concerning the Sonne, of whom thou saidst we were redeemed, and that he did continually make intercession for vs.

I do therefore demande of thee, in which articles that redemption and intercession is contained?

Mat. Indeed redemption hath chiefly the foundation in the article of the death and passion of Christ, which is as it were the price of our redemption: For by it, ioyning thereto the resurrection, we were deliuered from the tyranny of the Diuell, and brought into the liberty of Gods children, which Christ himselfe witnesseth in these wordes, *Mat. 20. 28* The sonne of man is come into this world to giue his life a price of redemption for many.

Concerning his intercession: it is ioyned by *Paule* with the article of sitting at the right hand of God, as a part thereof. These be his words, what is he that shall cōdemne? It is Christ which is dead, yea rather which is raised vp frō the dead, who also is at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for vs. For because the sitting at the right hād of the Father is referred to dignity, whereunto he is aduanced with the father, by a similitude taken from kings, which are wont to place those at their right hand, that be most welcome and acceptable to them, and whom they desire to haue most honoured, therefore doth he ioyne his intercession with it to the end we might know, that Christ bestoweth the great authority he hath with his Father in this, that by the benefit of his death, hee might become mercifull vnto vs. *Rom. 8. 34*

Theoph. Forasmuch as in these three articles of the death, resurrection, and the sitting of Christ at the right hand of the Father, the chiefe points of our saluation be cōtained, why were the other articles put into the Creed, especially seeing it is a summe, and as it vvete an epitomie or abridgement of the things vvhich are to be beleued to our comfort and saluation? *vwhy there be in the Creed more articles of Christ then these three*

Mat. It vv as that our faith might be the better defended, against the temptations of the diuell and the flesh.

Theoph. I doe desire to haue these things declared by thee more at large, & to be instructed, to what temptation,

each article of the faith is opposed or set against, that if at any time need shall be, I may make my vse of them.

The vse of
the articles
of the faith
against
three sun-
dry temp-
tations.

Psal. 51. 7.

Ephes. 2. 3.

Conceiued
by the holy
Ghoit.

Mat. 1. 20.

Mat. The things which haue bene spoken by me in the former Chapter, of the person and office of Christ, ther is no cause in this place to repeat. This only I wil shew, that each article is placed in most exquisite order, to the ende we might acknowledge in Christ, remedies against euery kinde of spirituall sicknesses, and against all the punishments which we haue deserued. As first of all, we indeede be conceiued in sin, by meanes whereof it is that wee are the children of wrath. The remedy against this euill, is that, which in the first place we belecue of Christ, namely, that he was conceiued by the Holy Ghost, that we may know our conception to be sanctified in Christ, so as now euen from our first beginning, we are by him consecrated to God the Father.

Theoph. Why was it necessaric, that for these things Christ should be conceiued by the holy Ghost?

Mat. Because the naturall order of humane generation is defiled and corrupted, so as it was altogether necessaric that the holy Ghost should haue the worke in that cōception, to purge and cleanse the substance of the virgin of whom he was conceiued, and that thus he might be pure, and free from the blot of originall sinne, wherewith if he had bene defiled, he himselfe should haue needed a redeemer and mediator, so farre should he haue bene from redeeming vs, and from being able to reconcile vs to God the Father. Adde hereunto, that there can be no ioyning of the Godhead with that that is vncleane.

Borne of
the virgine
Mary.

Mat. 1. 16.

Gal. 4. 4.

Theoph. Wherfore, hauing mentioned his conception, is it by and by added, that hee was borne of the virgin Marie?

Mat. It was to teach vs, that he did not onely take our nature, as one which was made of a woman, as *Paule* speaketh: but also that we might know him to be that very redeemer and Messias promised to the fathers, forasmuch as he was borne of a virgine descending from *Adam* to *Dauid*, according to the Prophecies of of the Prophets, and that in the time and place by them appointed.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why was it necessary that his mother should be a virgin?

Mat. That both in his conception and natiuitie, the worke of God might the more plainly appeare, and that there might be nothing wherby to darke it neuer so little.

Theoph. Declare the other articles.

Mat. Because after our conception and birth, for the innumerable sinnes by vs daily committed, we had deserued to suffer euen in this life all manner of reproches and contumelies, and besides in time to come hereafter, most grieuous torments both in soule and body, it is expressly mentioned, that Christ suffered all those things for vs, when it is said, he suffered vnder Pontius Pilate: for vnder him, for vs, in our stead, he was bound, railed vpon, beaten & crowned with thornes. Moreouer, we had deserued most cruell death with reproch and shame: this also Christ suffered for vs. For he was crucified between two theeues, which kinde of death was accursed of God himselfe, for it was appointed for euill doers and wicked me. But by dying he ouercame death, so as death is now to vs, not deadly, but making alieue. Moreouer, the iudge is named vnder whome he suffered, not so much to prooue the certainty of the story, as to teach vs that Christ, notwithstanding he were most iust and innocēt, was for vs condemned before an earthly Iudge, as a guilty person, that by his most vniust condemnation, we should haue full absolution & discharge before the iudgement seate of God.

Theoph. I desire to haue that more largely declared by thee, which I heard euen now of the death of Iesus Christ; namely that by dying he ouercame death, so as it is not now deadly vnto vs, but making alieue.

Mat. That thou maist vnderstand these things rightly, it is to be knowne, that death whē it would haue swallowed vp Christ, in whome is the fountaine of life, was it self swallowed vp of him, so as he became deadly to death, according to the prophēcie of *Hosai*; O death I will bee thy death. Seeing therefore by the death of Christ death is swallowed vp in victorie, now the faithfull are deliuered from the tyranny of it. There is no cause then why wee should

Suffered vnder Pontius Pilate.

Crucified.

Mat. 27. 35

Dead.

Mat. 27. 50

How Christ brought death to death.

Hos. 13. 14

1. Cor. 15.
34.

fear it, nay rather let vs be bolde to prouoke, and as it were to challenge death with the Apostle crying out, O death where is thy victory?

Theoph. But it doth still daily exercise his tyranny vpon the faithfull, for it killeth them.

Death deli-
uereth the
faithfull
from innu-
merable
deaths.

Mat. Nay rather cleane contrariwise: for while it seemeth to kill the, it deliuereth the from a thousand deaths, that is to say, from the innumerable troubles of this worlde, to the end they may liue most blessedly in the heauens.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward to the rest.

Mat. We had deserued, that our bodies after death, should be thrust into the graue, which is deaths prison & that our soules should be cast downe into hell, to bee tormented with euerlasting paines.

Christ, that he might remedy both the euils, would haue his body buried, that so he might pursue death it selfe being readie to dy, into his owne hold, that is to say, into the graue: whose nature therefore he changed so as it is no more to vs the gaile of death, but a place appointed of God, wherein our bodies are kept against the day of the glorious resurrection.

Act. 7. 60.

1. The. 4. 13

For this cause the Scripture affirmeth, that the faithfull departed, are not deade but asleepe. Whereupon it came to passe, that the fathers of the primitive Church named those places wherein the bodies of the faithfull were buried *quartiers*, that is to say, sleeping places.

He descen-
ded into
hell.

Mat. 26. 38

Moreover, Christ would tarry in the graue some daies, that so it might certainly appear, that he was dead indeed. But then he descended into hell for vs, when he endured those most extreame torments and sorrowes, euen the wrath of God, which he had deserued. Now those were the euerlasting punishments, which we should haue suffered.

Vpon the feeling of these sorrowes, he sweat bloude in the garden, and not for feare of bodily death: for otherwise he should haue bin the most fearefull of al other men.

Luk. 22. 44.

Mat. 27. 46.

Moreouer these sorrowes caused, that in the very agony he cryed out; my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Yet not that God euer forsooke him, but because hee was in our steede, and offered himselfe to his Father as a

baille

baile for vs, it was necessarie that his diuinitie should bee hidden for a time, vntill the humanitie had suffered al the things, which both here and in the world to come we had deserued. Howbeit the punishment which in respect of vs was eternall and endlesse, in Christ was made temporarie and hauing end, because he himselfe is eternall and infinite, and therefore he put an ende to those euerlasting punishments, whereunto we were accursed.

Thioph. But this article of Christs descending into Hell, is placed in the Creede after his buriall: wherefore it seemeth that it cannot be referred vnto those paines which he suffered before death: for the order it selfe is against it. Moreouer, this selfe same thing seemeth to be contained in another article, euen in that *hee suffered vnder Pontius Pilate*: in which words, not those paines onely are to be vnderstood, which he suffered in his body, but those also which he suffered in his soule.

Mat. This article of Christes descending into Hell, cannot otherwise be expounded, but as it hath bene expounded of me. For if it be referred to his buriall, as some would haue it, bringing for the confirmation of their opinion those places of Scripture, wherein the graue it selfe is called by the name of Hell, it shall be nothing else, but a repetition of that which is farre more plainly set out in the former Article: which indeede doth not agree to so short a summarie as the Creede is. Much lesse is this article to be vnderstood of Christs soule going downe into the place of the damned. For Christ saide to the theefe, this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Moreouer, there was no such thing further required, for as much as all things were finished vpon the Crosse: for hee said a little before his death, it is finished. Concerning the order or method, it hath bene before declared by vs, that they which wrote this Creede looked vnto this, that in each article they might set before vs, the seuerall remedies, which be ministered vnto vs by Christ, against all kinds of temptations and spirituall diseases. Therefore they would not onelie expresse the paines which he suffered in his body, but also the fearefull torments which he suffered in his soule, and

Luk. 23. 43.

Ioh. 19. 39.

The order
of the arti-
cles which
respect
Christ.

which vnto vs are most terrible, for these wee haue deserued to endure for euer in Hell it selfe: the temptations whereof farre exceede that which ariseth of the afflictions of this life, yea and bodily death. Wherefore hauing comprehended all these paines generallie in this Article, he suffered vnder Pontius Pilate, afterward they would handle them particularly. And first of all, those which he suffered in body, in these words; Hee was crucified, dead, and buried: for they purposely ioyned his buriall, that as it were in one rowe, they might comprehend all things, which appertaine to the abasing of his bodie. Which being declared, they added those horrible torments, which hee suffered in his soule, in these words; He descended into Hell. Which they did, to the ende we may vnderstand, that Christ when he had suffered all the things, which wee should haue suffered in Hell, did as much, as if by a locall descending, hee had descended into Hell it selfe; and that therefore we are free from it.

Theoph. Now do I very well allow the exposition of this article which you haue deliuered, as that which bringeth vs no small comfort. Yea I doe very well like the order of it selfe. For it is easier to apply the sufferings of Christ to our selues, when they are reckoned vp in that order wherein we should haue suffered them then in any other.

Mat. Thou iudget rightly: for the temptation of the second death, that is to say, of the punishments which abide for vs in hell, is wont to come into our mindes after the temptation of the first death.

Theoph. Declare vnto me the other articles.

The third
day he rose
again.

Luk. 24. 17.

Ephes. 4. 8.

He ascen-
ded into
heauen.

Act. 1. 9.

Mat. The resurrection followeth, by the which Christ ouercame death, hell, sinne, yea the diuell himselfe, and triumphing over them, and leading them captiues, hee ascended into heauen, whither hee is gone vp with the greatest glorie, not so much for himselfe, as thereby to open a way for vs, and to take possession of it in our name, vntill our soules come to possesse it after death, and body and soule together after the resurrection. But because so long as wee here lue, euen after wee are by

faith

faith made partakers of Christes giftes, we fall into many sinnes, which are wont to trouble our consciences, and to weaken our faith, it is by and by added, that he sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to the ende we might know, and be assured of that intercession which hath before bene mentioned. And so we might vnderstand, that after he had once suffered death vpon the Crosse for our sinnes, hee doth continually offer the merite hereof vnto his father for vs, and therefore causeth the father himselfe to be fauourable vnto vs. Which thing *Paule* sheweth in these words; Christ is at the right hand of the Father, and maketh request for vs.

And sitteth
at the right
hand of
God the fa-
ther Al-
mightie.
Col. 3. 1.

Rom. 8. 34

More, he vseth that great authoritie whereunto he is aduanced, to the gouernmet and help of his Church against all the hurts that might come vpon it, and to the accomplishment of our saluation. Finally, because (such is the weakenesse of our faith) some feare of condemnation may assaile our mindes in that last day, wherein the Lord will render to euerie one according to his workes: therefore that this temptation may be met with, it is said further, that Christ which is our intercessor, shal also be our iudge. And this is the meaning of that article, wherein we belecue that he shall come to iudge quicke and dead, euen that we might be without all feare of condemnation; and contrariwise, certainly know, that by the sentence of the Iudge himselfe, we shall obtaine saluation.

Mat. 16. 17

Frō thence
he shall
come to
iudge quicke
and dead.

Theoph. Who are those quicke and dead, who thou sayest shall be iudged of Christ?

Mat. The quick are they which at that day shall bee aliue, who also as *Paule* saith, shalbe changed in the twinkling of an eye: and the dead are they, whom death before shall haue taken out of the company of the liuing.

1. Cor. 15. 52

Theoph. But is it necessarie, that the dead should rise againe in that day, of whom iudgement was giuen before, whether they be good or euill?

Mat. These things shall not let their appearing at that day; and that for two causes.

1. The first, because that first iudgement pertainerh onely to the soule: but the latter to the whole man.

2 The other is, that that particular iudgement may bee proclaimed before all men, and so there may bee a more manifest declaration of God his righteousness. Therefore the Scripture affirmeth, that in that day both good and bad shall be iudged by Christ according to their workes: which without doubt shall be brought to light, as it were manifest testimonies either of the faith, or the vnbeleefe, lying hid in the heart, although faith it selfe, or vnbeleefe in those that come to yeares, be speciall causes either of the saluation or damnation of men, as it is declared by the Iudge himselfe; He that beleeueth in me, is not condemned: but he which beleueth not, is condemned already, because he hath not beleued in the name of the onely begotten Sonne of God.

Iohn. 3. 18.
& 5. 24.

Why christ's
 death is
 mentioned
 oftner in the
 Scriptures,
 then the o
 ther thinges
 he did for
 vs.

Theoph. I doe now at length acknowledge all the articles which appertaine to the faith of Christ, to be indeede profitable, yea necessarie to the establishment of our faith. I would notwithstanding know, why in the Scriptures his death onely is for the most part spoken off, as in that place of *Paule*, We are reconciled by the death of his Sonne.

Mat. By such kind of speeches, the Scriptures, desirous of breuitie and shortnesse, for the chiefe part nameth the whole. Neuerthelesse, sometimes his resurrection also is ioyned, because in it Christ ouercame death: whereupon it is, that the force of Christs death hāgeth vpon his resurrection. For if Christ be not raised vp (saith *Paule*) our faith is vaine. This also is to be noted by the way, that the death of Christ is not seldome vnderstood by his blood, because that powring out of his blood, amongst other thinges which he suffered for vs, is very excellent and notable.

1. Cor. 15.
 34.

Theoph. Bring forth some testimonies for it.

Mat. They are to bee found euerie where in the holy writings. Peace beeing made by the blood of Christ, by him he hath reconciled all things to himselfe; as well those that be in earth as those that bee in heauen, that is to say both those that be in the Church already receiued into heauen, as those that be yet in the militant Church below.

Col. 1. 20.

We were redeemed not with corruptible things, as siluer or gold: but with the precious blood, as of a Lambe without spot, and vndefiled, euen of Christ. We are iustified by the blood of Christ. 1. Pet. 1. 19.
Rom. 5. 9.

*The third part of the Apostles Creede: which is,
of faith in the holie Ghost.*

Theoph. We haue proceeded farre inough concerning faith in Christ. Now therefore we must come to the third part of the Creed, which is of the holy Ghost, whereunto thou diddest attribute, that it doth sanctifie vs, and ioine vs with Christ. But there be two things, which I will propound vnto thee to be declared.

1 First, wherein that sanctification standeth.

2 Secondly, in what sence thou saiest, that we are by the holy Ghost ioined with Christ, for as much as euen now thou ascribedst that vnto faith.

Mat. The sanctification which the holy Ghost worketh in vs, standeth heerein, that it amendeth the corruption planted in our minds, & repaireth the decay of our soules, otherwise cast away and vndone by originall sin.

Theoph. Declare to me the effects of that repairing.

Mat. First of all, it lighteneth our minds, so as we do acknowledge the true God in Christ, & yeeld him the worship due to his maiestie.

Secondly, it reformeth our heartes, working faith in them, which piety or godlinesse followeth, that is to say, the loue and feare of God, from whence also springeth repentance it selfe. For this faith which lieth hid in the hart, sheweth it selfe, as it were visible to the eyes. But the sanctification, whereof we speake, is not seldome called by the name of regeneration.

Theoph. Why is it called also by this name?

Mat. Because, when the holy Ghost by his grace and verue worketh in vs, stedfastly to beleue the things, which in former times we condemned, and that truly repenting, we do the things which bee directly contrary to our former actions: wee doe in verie deede seeme to bee borne againe,

*Ephes. 4. 24**2. Cor. 5. 17*

What our
regeneratiō
or sanctifi-
cation is.

Col. 3. 10.

again, and to be made new men as *Paule* speaketh. And verily all the parts and qualitie, of our soule are so reformed, as they may seeme to be altogether changed.

Theoph. Therefore this sanctification or regeneration, is nothing else, but the repairing of the image of God, which we lost in *Adam*.

Mat. Thou iudgeth rightly; and *Paule* himselfe testifieth this, when he saith, that we haue put on the new man, which is renewed into knowledge, agreeable to the image or likenesse of him that created him. But *Christ* is he, by whom that likenesse of God is brought from heauen vnto vs, and communicated by spirituall regeneration, euen as *Adam* by carnall generation had made vs partakers of sin with him.

Theoph. Thou speakest of two generations, very much differing the one from the other, I meane the first which we haue from *Adam*, from that which *Christ* worketh in vs by his spirit.

1.

Mat. Verily, by that first generation we are borne vnto sinne, but by this latter we are borne vnto righteousnesse.

2.

By the first we are borne children of wrath; by the latter, children of God.

3.

By the first we are borne vnto death, by the latter vnto euerlasting life. And for this cause *Christ* said to *Nicodemus*, Except a man be borne againe, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Iohn. 3. 3.

Theoph. Hitherto I haue heard what sanctification or regeneration is, namely that it consisteth in the vnderstanding of heauenly things concerning our saluation; and in the reformation of our hart and will, which causeth vs to beleue in God through *Christ*, and to obey him. But how is it that the Apostle who thou citedst speaking of this repairing, maketh mention onely of the vnderstanding, and not of the will? For he saith, that we haue put on the new man, which is renewed into knowledge agreeable to the image of him that created him.

Col. 3. 10.

Mat. In that place indeede there is onely mention of knowledge, but vnder the name of knowledge are vnderstood both holinesse of life and reformation. Which also

also, in another place, are by name spoken of by the same Apostle, when he saith, that that new man is put on which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. Thou seest that in those places, one part is taken for both, because they are at once or together reformed by the holy Ghost, although in diuerse manner. For to some hee giueth more knowledge then reformation. And contrariwise to some others, more zeale and reformation, then knowledge.

Ephes. 4. 24

Theoph. But how is it, that there bee many also found, vnto whom there is giuen more then common knowledge of God, and of his truth, whose life notwithstanding is most wicked?

Mat. I indeede I grant this, that God sometymes giueth euen to the vnfaithfull some knowledge of his trueth, which also for the most part is coloured with great words, and externall shew. But it is not the right knowledge of the true God, which is alwaies ioyned with his obedience. Neither indeed can any man know him, but he is straight waies beloued of him: but that loue cannot stand, except we doe obey his commandements. Therefore *Iohn* saith, By this wee know that wee know him, if wee keepe his commandements. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandements, is a lyer, and the truth is not in him.

1. Iohn. 2. 3.

Theoph. But whether of those two is the better, either the knowledge of God, or the obedience of his commandements?

Mat. I indeede knowledge is better then obedience in this, that it begetteth in vs both the loue and obedience of God: but especially for that by it wee are transformed as the Apostle speaketh, from glory vnto glory, that is to say, as it were by certaine degrees, as that knowledge getteth increase in vs. Neuerthelesse, that image or likenesse of God, doth not so expressly shine in vs in knowledge, which for the most part lyeth hid in the mind, as it doth in obedience, namely while we liue temperately, iustly, and godly: for those excellēt vertues declare vs not to be bastards, but the true children of God.

2. Cor. 3. 18

Tit. 2. 12.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because as we are thought their children according to the flesh, whose likenesse we haue concerning the body: so are we accounted his spirituall children, whose spirituall likenesse we shew in our works.

Theoph. Thou callest the words of Christ to my remembrance, wherewith he reproveth the Scribes and Pharisees, boasting themselves to be the children of *Abraham*. If you were *Abrahams* children, you would do the works of *Abraham*. You are of your father the diuell, and the lusts of your father will you fulfill.

Mat. Very truly. Hereunto also may bee referred that saying of Christ, which he addeth after that he had exhorted vs to holinesse of life; *That you may bee the children, of that your father which is in heauen.* But this holinesse and reformation of life are effects and fruits of repentance, whereof mention was made before by vs, when we spake of sanctification.

Theoph. Let vs therefore now speake somewhat of repentance: and first what is repentance?

Mat. It is the hatred of sinne, and an earnest loue of righteousness, by the which we are continually stirred vp to abhorre our vices, and are moued to do good workes, not for feare of punishment, or hope of reward, but for that loue we beare towards God, which worketh in vs, that with a ioyfull hart we are moued to his obedience, and with griefe goe astray from his commaundementes. And therein is the promise fulfilled made vnto vs of God by his Prophets, namely that he will take from vs the stony hart, in steed whereof he wil giue vs an heart of flesh wherein he will engraue his Law, that we may walke in his commaundements. Hence it commeth, that the Law of God, which in former times was grieuous and hated of vs, is now not onely not grieuous, but most acceptable and delightfull, euen as it is written by the Prophets.

Ier. 31. 33. *Eze.* 36. 26

Psal. 119. 14. 17. 47.

Theoph. How many parts of repentance be there?

Mat. Two. Namely,

1. The mortification or killing of the old man, that is to say, of the corruptiō which by reaso of sin sticketh within vs
2. And

2. And the resurrection of the new man.

The same also be the partes of regeneration: for it is necessarie, that the holy Ghost doe first kill all euils, and euen corruption it selfe, before it plant good thinges in our hartes. But that mortification hath it force from the death of Christ, of whome when we are made partakers by faith, he doth not onely blot all our sinnes, but also causeth that we acknowledge them, and being acknowledged, doe hate them. Which thing *Paule* teacheth vs in these words: This we know, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sinne might bee weakned, that hereafter we should not serue sinne. *Rom. 6. 6.*

Moreouer, the rising againe of the new man, which borrowing his force and efficacie from the resurrection of Christ, worketh strength in vs, by meanes whereof from the heart we apply our selues to the obedience of GOD, which also the same Apostle plainly teacheth, where hee saith: We are buried together with Christ by Baptisme in. *Rom. 6. 4.* to his death, that as Christ is raised vp from the deade, into the glory of the Father, euen so should wee walke in newnesse of life.

Theoph. Are then these two partes ioyned together by so strict a band, that the former can neuer be seuered from the latter?

Mat. They are indeede: for it is impossible that any man should be partaker of Christes death, but the same also is partaker of the fruite of his resurrection. The Apostle expressly affirmeth it; if we be grafted with Christ to the similitude of his death, euen so shall wee bee to the similitude of his resurrection. For this cause so often as the Scripture speaketh of repentance, it doth not onely simply vnderstand some griefe conceiued for our sins, but reformation of life, & returning to a better course, which be witnesses of that sorrow lying hid in the heart. Therefore such as brag of repentance, and yet doe not returne, nor giue themselves to amendment of life, are lyers, and do mock God himselfe. *Rom. 6. 5.*

Theoph. Thou saiest truly: for in our common life, he should be thought to mocke vs, that saide hee was sorry
he

he had done vs wrong, and yet indeede continued in the thing it selfe. I do rest satisfied in this doctrine of regeneration. But by it, that is not a little confirmed which was before prooued by thee in the Chapter of *Man*, namely, that man by his owne nature is the seruant of sinne, which neither vnderstandeth heauenly things that appertaine to his saluation, neither hath any freedome or power to doe that which is good. For seeing those faculties and powers are giuen vnto vs by the spirit of regeneration, it is without doubt that we lack them, and therefore that wee are altogether vnable of our selues to belecue, or to doe well.

Of mans
freewill.

Mat. Thou gatherest well. But because this doctrine concerning mans free will, before this time, being as it is at this day in controuersie, is notwithstanding of great force to the establishment of the glory of God, & of our owne saluation, although it hath before bene declared by vs, yet I will not thinke much to speake of it againe, and to confirme it by testimonies of the Scripture. And first of all, concerning the true knowledge of God and of Iesus Christ, which is the foundation of our saluation: Christ himselfe saith; No man knoweth the Son, but the father, neither doth any mā know the father but the Son, & he to whō the Son wil reueale him. No mā can come to me, except the father that lett me draw him. But concerning the wil, & that power wherby we doe obey God, *Paul* saith: It is god which worketh in vs to wil, & to perform it. Which also is confirmed of Christ himselfe, by a most fit similitude, in these words; As the brāch can bear no fruit of it selfe, except it abide in the vine euē to neither cā you, except you abide in me. He that abideth in me, and in whō I abide, the same bringeth much good fruit, for without me you cā do nothing. Which things being so, what can man of himselfe belecue in the matter of religiō, but error & lies? what is he able to do whē the questiō is of worshipping God, but al maner vice & wickednes? I wil adde a place out of *Paul*, wherein al this doctin in one word is plainly set down You were dead in sin & trespasses. He saith not that you were sick, so as some little life was left in you, but you were altogether dead. The selfe same thing also he confirmeth after-

wardly

Ephes. 2. 1.

ward, whē he saith, that, in being regenerated by God, wee were raised vp frō the dead. If therfore the vnregenerate man be spiritually dead in sins, it followeth that he hath no more vnderstanding in things pertaining to eternall saluation, then hath a dead man in the things of this life.

Moreouer, if a man vnregenerate be spiritually dead in sins, hee hath no more power to doe a good deed, then a dead man hath to do the actions of the body.

Therfore euen as our soule giueth life to the body, so also the spirit of God is the life of our soule, being otherwise dead, & vnable to belecue or do any thing that is good.

7h. Although I do wholly giue consent to this doctrine, which I see hath expresse grounds in the holy Scriptures, yet I will propound vnto thee a certaine obiection, sometimes put forth to my selfe; about the answering whereof, I found no smal difficulty: namely, that God seemeth to mock vs, who so often by the Prophets exhorteth vs to turne vnto him, & to keep his commandments, if it were not in our power, at least in some part, to do this.

Furthermore, that exhortatiōs be made in vain, the vse of admonitiōs is but needlesse, & that reproofes are but ridiculous, if it were not in the power of the sinner nor to sin.

Mat. They that measure the strength of man by Gods cōmandements, be altogether deceived. For Christ commāded vs: Thou shalt loue the Lord thy god, with all thy hart, with all thy soule, & with all thy mind. And again, Be you perfect, as your father which is in heauen is perfect. *Mat. 22. 37*

But what is he which confesseth not, that he can neuer come to that diuine perfection, nor loue him with that loue that is due.

Therefore as it is notably written by *Austin*, God commandeth the things which we cannot doe, that wee might know what we ought to aske of him. Which indeed may appear euen by this, that euery where by the Prophet, the Lord cōmāded vs to turn vnto him, & to repent vs of our sins. But *Jeremy* answereth, cōuert me Lord, & I shal be cōuerted: whē thou didst correct me, I did repēt. For thus *Eze.* 18. 30. cause the same *Austin*, which hādled this doctrin of free *leel.* 2. 2. wil most excellētly, writeth in another place, O Lord giue *Confess.* 1. 15 me that which thou cōmādest, & cōmand what thou wilt,

Theoph. Indeed this is a solution, or answer to that objection, not to be despised.

Mat. I doe adde, that it may be gathered out of *Paule*, that exhortations to holinesse of life, haue not their foundation vpon our naturall powers, but vpon the promise of God, wherein he promiserh to be with vs, not to helpe our Freewill in part, but wholly and altogether himselfe alone to make it good in vs.

Theoph. Bring some places out of *Paule*, for the confirmation of this doctrine.

1. Thes. 5.

23. 24.

Mat. Writing to the Thessalonians, when he hath admonished them to liue blamelesly, iusty, and soberly, in loue and in patience, he prayeth to sanctifie them, to the end they might be able to performe those things: and at length saith; Faithful is he that hath called you, which wil

Phil. 2. 12.

13.

also do it. in another place also, after he had exhorted the Philippians, to worke out their owne saluation with feare and trembling presently he addeth: For it is God which worketh in you both the will and the deede, euen of his good pleasure.

Theoph. What vse is there of exhortations, admonitions, and reprehensions to the vnbeleuers?

Mat. They shall be a witnesse against them, when they come to the iudgement seate of God: For they shall the more be conuenced of rebellion against God, and of the hardening of their owne hearts.

Theoph. I am now well furnished against those, that shall hereafter set vpon me with that obiection.

To conclude, it seemeth to me, that that this doctrine may fitly be referred to that, which sometimes I haue heard of thee; namely that all the finnes of men be of themselves, and not of God; but that their good workes, if they do any, be not of themselves, but of God.

Mat. True, Neither is there any cause, why we should
Ihon. 7. 18. feare to receiue this for true doctrine, forasmuch as it tendeth both to the glory of God, and the throwing down of our selues, which is a most certaine marke, whereby wee may discern or know true doctrine from false, according to the rule of Christ.

Theoph.

Theoph. Now we are to goe forward to the rest. Wee haue at large handled the first effect of the holy Ghost; let vs therefore come to the other. How makest thou the holy Ghost the author of our vnion or being made one with Christ, which in the beginning of this Chapter, thou diddest attribute vnto faith?

Mat. When I did attribute or giue it to faith, I did it according to the vse of the Scripture; but this I meant that faith is the instrument, and as it were a spirituall hand, by the which we do receiue Christ with all his gifts. In the meane time, this is to bee vnderstoode, that the holy Ghost is author of them all. For the vniting of vs to Christ which is in heauen, is not done but by his owne diuine power. Adde hereunto, that the holy Ghost begetteth faith in vs, & therby sanctifieth vs, that so we may be made fit to receiue Christ, and apply him with all his gifts vnto our selues.

In what
sense the
holy Ghost
is said to be
author of
our vnion
with Christ.

*The fourth part of the Apostles Creede,
which is concerning the Church.*

Theoph. We haue expounded three parts of the Creed: it remaineth that we com to the fourth, which concerneth the Church. Now there come two things to my minde, whereunto I would haue thee to answer. First

1. What the Church is; and
2. Why thou saidest, that by the working of the holy Ghost, we are ioyned with it.

Mat. The word Church, signifieth a company: in this place it is taken for the company of the faithfull chosen of God.

What the
Church is.

But although the Church bee onely one, which is the Spouse and the mystical body of Christ, yet it is wont to be considered in two respects,

1. As it is inuisible. And
2. As it is visibie.

Theoph. What dost thou vnderstand by the name of the inuisible Church?

Of the inui-
sible church.

Mat. All the elect, which may be deuided into three sorts.

1. The first, of them which already be receiued into

E

heauen,

heauen, who are therefore called the Tryumphant Church, because, hauing ouercome all temptations and troubles, they enioy the heauenly glory.

2. The second is, of them which do yet liue in the earth.

3. The third of them that are yet vnborne. Now these three partes in that last day, shal be gathered together into one body, and they shall be a Church altogether triumphant and glorious.

Theoph. Which is the visible Church?

Of the visible church.

Mat. The company of the faithfull, gathered together in the name of Christ, to be instructed and confirmed in his faith, by the sincere preaching of the word, as also by the right & lawfull vse of the Sacraments, which are two most certaine marks, wherewith God would marke her out, and as it were set her forth to be seene, that she might be knowne of all her children, & they might be gathered vnto her.

Now this is that which is called the militant Church, because continually it warreth with the diuell the flesh & the world.

Theoph. Why will God haue all his children ioyne themselves to the visible Church?

Mat. That he may be worshipped of vs, which is when we doe agree together in calling vpon him, and that he, as a good house-holder, may feede vs with his word the spirituall foode, wherewith we may be daily strengthened, vntill he bring vs to the celestiall inheritance.

Theoph. What is the vse of this article?

Mat. You shall most easily perceiue it, if you doe but marke the testimonies of praise and commendation, wherewith *Paule* decketh the Church, which indeede are answerable to diuerse places of the Prophets. Now they be three, and that most excellent: For he termeth her

1. *Tim.* 3. 15

Gal. 4. 26

1. The house of God.

2. The pillar of truth.

3. The mother of all the faithfull.

Theoph. VVe are to examine the reason of these titles giuen vnto her. And first of all, why dost thou call it the house of God?

Mat.

Mat. That we may vnderstand, that God dwelleth in his Church, doth defend it, and guide it by his holy spirit. Euen as Christ himselfe saith: Where two or three bee *Mat. 18. 19* met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Theoph. Why is it called the pillar of truth?

Mat. Because by the ministerie thereof, God preserveth his truth in the world.

Theoph. What is that truth?

Mat. Christ himselfe, when as he is acknowledged to be not onely very God and very man in one person, but also a Sauour and redeemer, which is the most certaine truth, and most profitable to the beleeuers: for by it they attain eternall life. Which Christ himselfe affirmeth in these words: I am the way, the truth and the life. *1hon. 14. 6.*

Theoph. Therefore it followeth, that this Church which we beleeue, forasmuch as it is the pillar of truth, cannot erre.

Mat. Indeepe in those points which appertaine to the person and office of Christ, it cannot erre: but in some other parts of doctrine it may erre, which fallerth out not seldome.

Theoph. Why may it not erre in the things which concerne Christ, as well as in others?

Mat. Because by the testimonie of *Paule*, Christ is the onely foundation of the Church, which being taken away, it can no more stand, than an house without a foundation. *1. Cor. 3. 12*

Theoph. What if the Church erred in those things?

Mat. It should then not be a Church, but rather the synagogue of Sathan seeing it had ouerthrowne or pulled downe Christ the true foundation of it.

Theoph. But Christ seemeth to haue ordained another foundation of the Church beside himselfe, namely *Peter* the Apostle, to whom he said, Thou art *Peter*, & vpon this rocke will I build my Church. *Of the foundation of the church.*

Mat. The name of rocke no way can or ought to bee referred vnto *Peter* himselfe, although the wordes may seeme to beare it. For *Paule* affirmeth, that no other founda-

1. Cor. 3. 11. dation can be laid by any, besides that that is laid, which is Iesus Christ. Moreouer, how absurd a thing shold it be, that the Church which is inuisible, should haue her foundation in mortall man, and that which more is, one verie weake, so as not long after he denyed Christ? Verily it hath neede of a stronger foundation; that it may bee able to stand against so many assaults, wherewith it hath beene and still is set vpon, by the diuell and the world, euen from the beginning.

Theoph. Deliuere therefore the true sense of those words of Christ to *Peter*.

Mat. 4. 18.
 & 10. 2.

Vpon Iohn
 tra. 124.

1. Pet. 2. 5.

Mat. Because *Peter* had confessed Christ to bee the sonne of the liuing God, Christ answereth; But I say that thou art *Peter*. Now he is called by that name which Christ had before giuen vnto *Simon*, because he was a liuing stone in the building of the Church, who acknowledged Christ to be the sonne of God, and therefore the chiefe stone in the Church. When therefore hee addeth; Vpon this rocke I will build my Church, that is referred to that rocke, which *Peter* himselfe had confessed. *Austin* agreeth with this interpretation: for he saith; The Church is built vpon the rocke, whereof euen *Peter* had his name: therefore truly the Lord saith; Vpon that rocke will I build my Church, because *Peter* had said; Thou art Christ the sonne of the liuing God. Vpon this rocke therefore, saith he, which thou hast confessed, I wil build my Church. For the rock was Christ, vpon the which foundation *Peter* himselfe was builded. For no other foundation can any man lay, but that which is already laide, which is Christ Iesus. These be the wordes of that father; wherewith also agreeth that which *Peter* saith, when he exhorteth the faithfull, that as liuing stones, they would bee built vpon Christ that chiefe stone. But he prooueth this out of the testimonie of *Esay*; Behold I put in *Sion* a chiefe corner stone, elect and precious, in whom whosoever beleeueth shall not be ashamed. He addeth also out of the Psalme: The stone which the builders refused, is made the head of the corner, that is to say, vpholdeth all the building.

Theoph.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue heard sufficiently of the second thing testified in the praise of the Church: we must com to the third. Why is it called the mother of vs all?

Mat. First, because God therein hath begotten vs with the incorruptible seede of his word. And then because he hath put vs ouer vnto it, as to a speciall good mother, to be gouerned and brought vp, that we may dayly encrease & growe in faith, vntill we attaine to the inheritance of our heuēly father. Wherefore, whosoever refuse the gouernmēt of this mother, can neither haue God for their father, nor claime to themselves any right in his inheritance.

Theoph. Let vs consider the very words of the Creede, *VWhy the Church is called holy.* and first of all; Why is the Church called holy?

Mat. For two causes: the first and chiefest whereof is this, because as *Paule* speaketh, It is sanctified after that he hath cleansed it, by the washing of water, through the word. As if he should say, that it was made cleane from all sinne, by the precious bloud of Christ, which is dayly presented vnto vs, both in the word and in the Sacraments. *Ephes. 5. 26*

The other cause is, for that the members of it, which indeede are regenerated and sanctified by the holy Ghost, do apply themselves diligently to holinesse of life: wherein by the benefit of the ministerie of the Church, they goe forward euery day somewhat. Notwithstanding, in themselves it is certaine, they be defiled with many filthineses and sinnes, which indeede are not imputed vnto them: for they are partakers of Christs merits, by whose helpe they obtaine forgiveness of sinnes.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other title of the Church: why is it called Catholike or Vniuersall?

Mat. That we may vnderstand, it is not now tied to any certaine place or people, as we read it was vnder the Law, before the comming of Christ: but that it is dispersed and scattered throughout the whole world, and distinguished into many members, which are particular Churches, gathered together in sundry places, which notwithstanding make one body of the Church, for they be endued with the same faith, and hope in Christ. *VWhy the church is called catholike.*

Of the
Church be-
fore christ.

Theoph. It may seeme then, that the Church, which was before the coming of Christ, was diuerse from ours.

Mat. I thou gatherest ill: for although in some circumstances it differed from ours, yet it was one Church in substance, forasmuch as both of them acknowledge

1. One and the selfe same father, God.
2. One Iesus Christ, redeemer and mediator.
3. Because also that olde Church had the same hope with vs, namely to obtaine saluation by faith in him; by the which faith the beleeuers euen then communicated with his body, and therefore were partakers of all his gifts.

4. Because they had the same ministerie of the word and sacraments with vs, as concerning the substance.

Theoph. But how could this be, that the faithful should be partakers of the true body of Christ, which was not yet borne?

Mat. It was then indeed spiritually receiued by faith, as it is this day of vs: this only is the difference, that our faith looketh to christ now long agoe manifested; but the faith of those auncientes looked to christ, which was not then come. Neither were they therefore excluded from the true partaking of him. For all things are present with
Apoc. 13. 8. God. Hence is that of *Iohn*; The Lambe (meaning christ) slaine euen from the foundation of the world.

Christ also affirmeth the selfe same thing, when he saith,
Iohn. 8. 56. *Abraham* reioyced to see this my day, and hee saw it, and was glad.

Theoph. But be there any places of scripture, whereby this may be determined, that the faithfull, which were vnder the law, were truly and indeed partakers of christes body?

Mat. There be. For *Paule* saith, That all the fathers did
1. Cor. 10. 3. eate the same spirituall foode with vs, and that they all dranke the same spirituall drinke: for they dranke of the spirituall rocke that followed them, and that rocke was Christ. By which words hee meaneth, that the fathers by their Sacraments did no lesse communicate with the body of christ and his gifts, then we do at this day by ours.

Theoph.

Theoph. What then is the difference betweene their and our Church.

Mat. There be reckned not one, but foure.

1. First, because the old Church did set forth Christ his death and resurrection darkely, by certaine outward ceremonies, as sacrifices, lights, washings, and such other, which of the same Apostle are called shadowes of things to come, but the body is Christ. *Col. 3. 17.*

Wherefore, seeing that by his comming he hath put an end to those ceremonies, he hath now discovered and manifested himselfe far more openly to vs. For he commeth forth, as it were in the mid-day, abounding with his gifts, that euery one may see and know them. For this cause the Apostle compareth the fathers which liued vnder the Law, vnto children, which did learne as it were their letters and first grounds; to giue vs to vnderstand, that we may be called learned and skilfull, if wee bee compared with them. This therefore is the first difference.

Theoph. Declare the second.

Mat. This consisteth in amendement of life: for as the knowledge of Christ is greater, so also the efficacy and working of the holy Ghost is far greater, which mortifieth our flesh, so as we do more earnestly obey his commandementes, according to the promises declared by the Prophets; This is the couenant which I will make with the houle of Israel: After those daies (saith the Lord) I will put my Law in their inward partes, and will write it in their hartes: I will put my Spirit within you; and will cause you to walke in my statutes, and to keepe my iudgementes, that you may doe them. Yet, not that the godlie before the comming of Christ, were without the Spirit of regeneration, but that we might bee taught, how the Lord in the very comming of Christ, by whose blood he renewed the couenant with vs, did more abundantly bestowe his giftes vpon his people. For this cause the Lord did suffer not a few blemishes of the Israelites, which among vs were not to be borne: no otherwise then as a most wise father will beare with many childish faultes of his sonnes, as long as they be children, but when they bee

Ier. 31. 33.
Eze. 36. 27.

come to yeares, he will in no case beare them.

Theoph. I would haue thee shew me some example.

Mat. 19.8.

Mat. I will alledge one ; The bill of diuorcement, which was nothing else but a libertie to put away the wife, euen for the smallest cause, But the Lord affirmeth, that it was permitted to the Israelites, for the hardnesse of their heartes, that is to say, atwell for their rudenesse, as for their infirmitie. Notwithstanding hee sheweth, That for the time to come it was not lawfull, but for fornication.

Theop. But it may be obiected, that we are so farre off, from excelling the fathers of the Israelitish Church, in holinesse and sanctimonie of life, that contrariwise, there bee not a fewe of them found, which did a great deale goe beyond vs, such as were *Moses, Elias, Daniel, &c.*

Mat. When we speake of the difference betweene the Church of the Israelites and ours, wee must not alledge some speciall gifts graunted to some speciall men, but it must be considered, what was the whole bodie of that Church, for therein standeth the difference.

Theoph. Declare the third difference.

Mat. It is herein, that euerlasting life was obscurely and darkely offered to the Israelites wrapped or folded vp in earthly promises. For they were childre, as *Paule* speaketh, whose age farre more esteemeth some small things, then those that be of the best value. But now after we be come to age, and are taught the Gospell, by meanes whereof the benefite of eternall life is much more plainly made knowne vnto vs, we are in the very right way, led to the hope and meditation of it, neither doe wee stay in these earthly and fraile things. And this was the cause why the Fathers vnder the Law esteemed this life more then wee ought to esteeme it.

Theoph. Now remaineth the last difference.

Mat. It is that, whereof by the way wee made mention: namely, that the Church vnder the law, was as it were bounded with the borders of Iudea, or shut vp within that countrey. But now it is scattered throughout the whole world,

world, neither is it tied to any place,

For this cause Christ, when he sent forth his disciples to preach the Gospel before his death, in plaine words forbad them to goe to the Gentiles, but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel. But after his resurrection, when he had put an end to the ceremonies of the law, hee biddeth his Apostles, going into all the world, to preach the Gospel to euery creature. *Mat. 10. 5. Mar. 16. 16.*

Behold what the differences be betweene the old and our Church. Now these haue beene the causes, that the bookes of the Bible, which respect the state of the Church before Christ was borne, had the name of the olde Testament; and those which were written after his resurrection, are called the new Testament, or the new Couenant, yet not that there be two couenants, or two Testaments betwixt God and his Church: for there is onely one which is diuersly considered.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward to the rest. What is the reason why we say: I beleeue the Church, and not, I see the Church?

Mat. Although particular Churches be seene of vs, yet because here is intreated of the vniuersall Church, which we cannot behold with the eyes of the body; therefore we doe not say, I see, but I beleeue the Church. I adde moreouer, that the Church properly is no other but that companie of the elect. For the hypocrites and reprobates which are mingled with the particular Churches, are not members of the vniuersall Church. I doe adde furthermore, for a larger declaration hereof, these two arguments, First

1 That it falleth out not seldome, that by the persecutions of the enimies, the Church is so scattered, that it seemeth almost to bee cleane put out: Howbeit it is not so, but onely for a time it is remooued from our sight, euen as the wheate lieth hidden vnder the chaffe. Which indeede came to passe in the daies of *Elias*: for the Prophet complained that he alone was left. For hee thought that all the people were fallen away from true Religion. *1. King. 19. 12.* Notwithstanding the Lord answered: There be remaining

VINTO

vnto me seuen thousand, which haue not bowed their knee before *Baal*. Therefore when the Church is hidden either in the whole or in the partes, yet ought we not thereupon to cease to beleue that it is. For the Lord said by the Pro-

Ier. 31. 36. phet, that Israels seed should not faile, as long as Sunne and Moone should be in the heauens. The same thing

Mat. 16. 18 doth Christ confirme, when he saith, that it shall neuer be, that the gates of hell shall ouercome the church, that is to say, that neither the diuell nor his Angells shall euer be able to bring to passe the finall or vtter destruction of the church, howsoeuer God sometimes so giue them the bridle, that is to say, such libertie, that they bring vpon it great calamitie. The church therefore may most fitlie

Exod. 3. 2. be compared to that bush, which *Moses* heretofore saw in the wilderness, which burnt in the fire, and was not consumed.

Theoph. How doth the speech of the gates of Hell, where of christ maketh mention, agree with the practises, deceits, and counsels of the Diuell?

Mat. It is a similitude or likenesse taken from common
Gen. 24. 40 wealths, in the which in former times iudgement was vsed at the gates of their cities, where also the store of Armour
Iudg. 5. 8. and munition for warres was kept. Hereupon it grew, that commonly in auncient times the gates were taken for strength and counsell.

2. *Theoph.* Bring forth the other argument, by the which thou maist prooue, that the Catholike Church is to be beleued.

Mat. It is drawne from this: that although in it there haue alwaies beene many elect (seeing the word of God is neuer preached in vaine,) yet neuertheless al they that ioyne themselues to particular Churches, do not straight way belong to the vniuersall Church: that is to say, are not by and by of the number of the faithfull and chosen. For as (saith *Austin*) there bee many sheepe without the sheepfold of Christ, which God in his time will call, so there bee many wolues in the very Church, whose hypocrisie the Lord in their time will discouer. Therefore (to vse the words of the Apostle) God onely knoweth who he
his.

Hom. 45.
upon Iohn.

his. And this is the cause, why making mention of the inuisible Church, I comprehended vnder it the elect of God still liuing in the earth. 2.Tim.2.

Theoph. But are the elect themselues, beeing called of God, and ioyned to the particular Churches, vncertaine of their saluation?

Mat. No not so. For each of them may know their own faith, by a discerning thereof put into them by the holy Ghost; but anothers faith they cannot. The word of beleeuing cōtaineth all these things. For it is as if thou saidest, I belecue that there is a certaine company of the faithfull & elect in the Church, which God defendeth in this world, of whose number I certainly know that I am. In the meane time christian charitie requireth this, that we iudge well of all those that haue ioyned themselues to particular churches, so long as they shew themselues tractable, and do obey admonitions.

Theoph. It commeth to my remembrance, that the article of the church is set after the article of the holy Ghost because the holy Ghost beareth witnesse within vs, that we be members of it.

Mat. Not onely for this cause, but especially because it is gathered together by the diuine working of it, by the which indeede wee are knit together into one bodie with christ, and are partakers of all his giftes: that is to say, the merite of his death is communicated vnto vs, by the which we obtaine forgiveness of sinnes; the force also of his resurrection is imparted to vs, whereby we shall rise againe glorified in that last day, and shall liue eternally with him. All which things, are in the creed in exact order set down presently after the article of the church.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue spoken sufficiently of the true church: and so we haue dispatched the first point that I propounded. Let vs therefore come to the other. What is the reason that thou saydest, wee were no lesse ioyned by the holy Ghost with the church, then with christ?

Mat. Because it cannot ioyne the faithfull with christ, but it doth also ioyne them together among themselues, euen as the members cannot bee ioyned with the heade, but

Of the communion of
Saints.

Col. 1. 18.

1. Cor. 12. 27

Act. 9. 4.

but they be also vnited together into the body. Now this is a most fit similitude, & best agreeth to the vnion which we haue with Christ. For as the head, if it be ioyned with the members, guideth them, nourisheth them, and giueth them life and motion, euen so Christ performeth all these things to his Church, with the which hee is made one by the working of the holy Ghost. For this cause is this sentence so often repeated of the Apostle; Christ is the head of the bodie of the Church. The faithfull are the bodie of Christ, and members for their part. Therefore Christ himselfe giueth his owne name to the Church, as when he reprooued *Paule: Saule, Saule*, why persecuest thou me? and this he doth because the head and members bee one.

A short exposition of the Apostles Creede.

Theoph. Thou hast made me to vnderstand all the articles of the Apostles Creede: Neuerthelesse, to the end the things which thou hast saide may sticke the faster in my minde, I desire that the summe of the same articles may be againe laid foorth in some short Paraphrase, or exposition, as also to be taught how the faithful may apply them to themselves.

I beleue in
God the fa-
ther.

Mat. Thou desirest a thing (except I be deceiued) not vnprofitable. Therefore euery one may comprehend the summe of the Creed, & apply it to himselfe, in these words; I put my whole trust in God the Father, as in him which will blesse me. For I doubt not, seeing he is the Father of Iesus Christ, but he is also my father, and therefore loueth me perfectly and infinitely, euen as hee himselfe is perfect and infinite.

Almightie
maker of
heauen and
earth.

Now, that will of his cannot be hindered by impotencie or weaknesse, as that of our earthly paréts is wōt to be. For he is omnipotent, and hath all creatures, as wel those that be in heauen, as those that be in earth, in his hand to doe me good, to keepe mee safe from all sinnes, and to helpe me in all my necessities, so farre foorth as hee himselfe shall know to be expedient for me: who also doth so keepe in, bridle, and hold backe the Diuell, and all mine enemies,

enemies, that they cannot by any meanes hurt me.

I do also put my whole trust in Christ Iesus our Lord, the onely sonne of God, of the same essence with the Father and the holy Ghost, who came downe into the earth, that he might lift me vp into heauen, which was made man, to the end he might haue the same God with me, & I might haue the same father with him. For these bee his words, I ascend or go vp to my father, and your father, & my God and your God.

And in Iesus Christ his onely Sonne our Lord.

Ioh. 20. 17.

Who also, that he might reconcile me to God the Father, was reconciled by the holy Ghost, and borne of the Virgine *Mary*: Moreouer vnder Pontius Pilate he suffered all the reproches which I had deserued. For hee was bound as a guilty person, that I might be loosed out of the chaine of the Diuell and sinne. He was condemned of an earthly Iudge, notwithstanding he were most iust and innocent, that I which am guilty of innumerable transgressions, might be discharged before the tribunall seat of the heauenly Iudge.

Which was conceived by the holy Ghost, borne of the virgin *Mary*, suffered vnder Pontius Pilate.

Who in scorne was cloathed in purple, and crowned with a crowne of thornes, that he might make me partaker of his glorious crowne and kingly dignity.

Who was nayled to the crosse, dead and buried, that he might deliuer me from the curse of death, and slavery of sinne, and the tyranny of the diuell.

Crucified, dead, and buried.

Who for me descended into hell, while as he in the very time of that passion, suffered both in soule and bodie, the fearefull torments of the wrath of God, which I had deserued, & wherwith I should for euer haue beene overwhelmed in hell: who also the third day rose againe from the dead, that for my sake death being fully overcome, he might giue me life.

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose againe from the dead.

Who finally ascended into heauen, from whence I was banished for my sinnes, that he might set open a passage for me into it, and might in my name take possession of the heauenly kingdome.

He ascended into heauen.

But now he sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and there continually maketh intercession for me with his Father, and offereth for me the merit of his

Sitteth at the right hand of god the father Almighty.

death

death, that so he may become mercifull vnto me.

From thence
he shall
come to
iudge the
quick and
dead.

I beleue also that at the last day he shall come visibly downe from the heauens to iudge both quick and deade. Neither is there any cause why I should feare, or be afraid of condemnation, seeing I shall stand at the iudgement seate of that Iudge, which is also my patron and aduocate. I do therefore assuredly know, that he will giue sentence on my side, and absolue me, that I may bee partaker of his glory.

I beleue in
the holy
Ghost.

I doe also put my whole trust in the holy Ghost, which is God of the same essence with the Father and the Son, who also hath ioyned me with Christ, and sanctified mee in him.

Which beareth witnesse with my spirit, that I am the childe of God.

Which maketh request for me with sighes that cannot be expressed.

Which comforteth me in aduersity.

Which kindleth a desire in vs to lead our liues in the obedience of God, strengtheneth vs, and finally giueth vs the gift of perseuerance to the end. Confirmeth & strengtheneth me against all temptations. If at any time I fall, it raiseth me vp by true repentance, and assureth me of assistance with his power, euen vnto death.

The holy
Catholike
Church.

I beleue the Catholike Church, gathered together by the power of the holy Ghost, that is to say the companie of the faithful choise of God, which are scattered throughout the whole world, of whole nūber I do certainly knowe my selfe to be one.

The com-
munion of
Saints.

I beleue that all we which are faithfull, are so vnited and ioyned with Christ our head, that we are made partakers of his gifts, that is of the merit of his death and the power of his resurrection.

The remis-
sion of sin.
Resurrection
of the body.
The life
perpetuall.

Whereupon I am assured of the full forgiuenesse of my sinnes, and of my glorious resurrection in the last day (which the partaking of eternall life shall follow) together with all the faithfull and elect, with whom he shall for euer be praised of me in the heauens.

Theoph. I haue verily heard of thee an excellent Paraphrase

phraſe or ſhort expoſition of the Apoſtles Creede, and ſuch a one as doth not a little ſerue for edification. But that thou maiſt prouide for, and helpe the memory of the vnlearned, draw all this into as ſhort a ſumme as thou canſt.

Mat. It cannot be made ſhorter, then if thou ſay: I put the whole hope of my ſaluation in one Ieſus Chriſt crucified, who being giuen vnto me by the mercy of the father communicateth himſelf vnto me by the power of the holy Ghoſt, to make me partaker of the merite of his death, and alſo of eternal life. Now this agreeth with that which the Apoſtle ſaith, I eſteemed not to know any thing among you but Ieſus Chriſt, and him crucified. The ſumme
of the
Creede.

1. Co. 2. 2.

Theoph. I am fully ſatiſfied with this expoſition of the Apoſtles Creede, and it containeth many things, which bring no ſmall comfort to the hearers. And I beſeech our good and heavenly father, to engraue them in our hearts by the working of the holy Ghoſt, and that ſo we may earnestly acknowledge and ſtedfaſtly belecue that immeaſurable loue where with he loueth vs in Chriſt Ieſus. By who he hath redeemed vs from euerlaſting death, and hath taken vs for his children, that at length we may be heires of his kingdome.

Mat. But now night draweth on, wherefore I would aduiſe, that wee deferre the reſt, till to morrow, Farewell *Theophilus.*

Theoph. Fare you well alſo *Matthæw.*

The end of the firſt Booke.

THE SECOND BOOKE
of Christian religion: wherein
the testimonies of our saluation
are declared.

CHAP. I.

*Of good works, by the which the faith that is hidden
in our hearts is manifested, that it may be seene
and knowne.*

Theophilus.



Od saue thee most dearly beloved
Matthevv.

Mat. God saue thee also most lo-
uing *Theophilus*: hast thou thought
vpon the things, which wee hand-
led yesterday?

Theo. Yea indeed most diligently,
insomuch as they occupied my mind
in my sleep: wherof to make prooffe,
if it be not troublesome to thee, I will cōprehend them in
a short sum, which shal be as an entrance for vs to the rest.

Mat. Thou shalt doe me a very great pleasure.

Theoph. The summe of our speech yesterday may bee
referred to foure heads.

1. The first whereof, is of God, distinct in three per-
sons. Who also by his prouidence gouerneth all things, is
most perfectly iust, and most perfectly mercifull.

2. The second is of man, who being by his owne nature
a most wretched sinner, is guilty of eternall death before
the iudgement seat of God.

3. The third is of Christ Iesus, whose death is a most
present remedy for vs against death.

4. The fourth is of faith, whereby that remedy is ap-
plied to vs for our saluation.

Now

Now vnlesse I be deceiued, order requireth, that wee speake of good workes, which do necessarily cleaue vnto faith, and be effectes of it. Moreouer, seeing in the first two Chapters of the former booke, it hath bene declared what manner one God is, and in the third and fourth Chapters what a one he sheweth himselfe towards vs; this one thing seemeth now to remaine, that we vnderstand, how we should carry our selues toward him, that is to say, what works are to be done of vs, that we may obey him, and be receptable to his Maiestie.

Mat. Thou hast very well deliuered the summe of our yesterdaies talke: I do also allow the order propounded by thee concerning good workes.

This one thing remaineth, that you mooue your questions of them in some easie method, to the end that this place which of it selfe is somewhat intricate and doubtful, may be plainly and clearly handled of vs.

Theoph. I haue no easier methode, then that which sometimes I learned of thee, namely that all this discourse bee bought vnto three heads.

1. First, what be the good workes, to be done of vs, that we may please God.

2. How we may performe those workes.

3. And thirdly, to what end we must do them, and what is the vse of them.

But in the former booke, when we spake of regeneration, we did sufficiently discusse this second point. For we taught that man of himselfe could do no good thing, and that God by his spirit, wrought in vs both to will & to be able to doe. We are therefore to examine the other two points which are behinde, which will cause vs to diuide this Chapter into two parts, if it to seeme good vnto you.

The first part of this Chapter, sheweth what good workes we ought to doe.

Theoph. Let vs therefore come to the first part: namely what good workes are to be done that we may obey God.

Mat. Before we goe any further, we are to call vpon God, without whose guidance we cannot thinke of, much lesse performe, any good thing. I do therefore beseech our good God & heauenly Father, to giue vs the spirit of wisdom & vnderstanding, that the things which we shall speak of good workes, may agree with the truth, so as they may tend to his glory & the building of his Church. Now *Theophilus*, do I answere vnto thy question; That we must doe those good workes to obey God, which himselfe hath commanded in his owne Law.

Theo. Why so?

Deut. 4. 3.

Deut. 5. 32

Mat. For he hath plainly forbidden to adde any thing to it, or to take aught from it, and hath commanded that no man should turne aside from it, either to the right hand or to the left.

Theoph. What if men be so rash, that they dare doe it?

Esa. 1. 12.

Mat. The Lord will not accept their foolish deuises for good workes, but will demand of them, that which in former times he demanded of the Israelites: Who required these things at your hands?

Theoph. I confesse it to be a most iust & righteous thing, that the worship of God should be according to his owne prescript, & not after the inuention of men: forasmuch as we also which are created of him, do require this of our seruants, that they serue vs according to our direction.

Mat. Right: for otherwise we might thinke our selues not the maisters, but the seruants of our seruants. Shoulde it therefore be righteous and iust, that God which is our Creator & Lord, should allow that in vs, which we our selues cōden in our seruants as a thing vnrighteous & vniust?

Theoph. Seeing they onely be good workes which God hath commaunded in his law; let vs see what that lawe of God is.

The morall
law.

Exod. 20. 2

Deut. 5. 6,

Mat. It is that which himselfe deliuered to his people by the hand of *Moses*, which also with his own finger he wrot in two tables of stone, forty daies after the deliuerance of the people out of their bondage in *Ægypt*, which is also commonly called the morall law; beginning thus, Heare *Israell*, I am the Lord thy God.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why is it called Morall?

Mat. Because it intreateth of manners, as it appeareth by the etimologic or true interpretation of the word. For it sheweth vs the vertues to be followed, to obey God, as also the vices to be auoided, least we incur his displeasure. But it is also called Morall, to put a difference betweene the Ceremoniall, which comprehendeth the ceremonies prescribed of God in the old Church, as also betweene the Iudiciall or Politicall law, which containeth iudgements, and the penalties to be inflicted vpon such as breake this Morall law.

The morall law distinct from Ceremoniall and Iudiciall.

Theoph. Is not this morall law, the same doctrine whereof the Philosophers wrote so many books; and which they called Morall Philosophie?

Mat. Yes verily. For it is nothing else, but the law of nature, which God hath ingraue in the harts of men, which also, because by little & little it wore out (for it was greatly darkned by sin) he did as it were renew by the proclaiming and writing of it. Therefore concerning the Philosophers, they onely attained vnto, and taught the shadow of that, the body whereof, & the very truth it selfe, is most briefly purtrayed or painted in this law, and is after beautifully set out in the proper colours in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles. For the Prophets and Apostles, so often as they intreate of vertues and vices, be the true interpreters of this Law.

The Morall law grauen in the minds of men, as it were renewed by Moses and expounded in many places of Scripture.

Theoph. Wherefore saiest thou that the Prophets and Apostles, when they speake of vertues & vices, be the true interpreters of the law?

Mat. Forasmuch as the Lord forbad to adde any thing to the Law, or take ought from it, it followeth necessarily, that it is most perfect, and that therefore whatsoeuer the Scripture in any place doth command or forbid vs, ought of necessity to be referred vnto the law; and bee accounted an exposition of it. And indeede by this meanes hee would take away all excuse from the transgressors of the Law.

Theoph. How?

Mat. First, that no man should pretend the largenesse

The morall
law com-
prised in
very few
words.

of it as an excuse, why he had not learned it by heart, the Lord would haue it brought into so many precepts, as we haue fingers vpon our hands. Whereupon, more then once it is called of *Moses*; ten words.

More large-
ly declared.

Afterward lest any by the shortnesse should seeke to excuse himselfe, that he could not come to the vnderstanding of it, the Lord would expound and declare his owne mind more at large by his Prophets and *Apostles*.

The exposition of the morall lawe.

Theoph. We are therefore to examine this morall Law. How many parts be there of it?

Two Tables

Mat. The Lord himselfe is the deuider of it, and hath deuided it into two Tables. In the former whereof, being perfected in foure commandementes, hee would establish true religion: for, it teacheth all the worship which he requireth of vs. But in the latter, in sixe commandements he hath taught, that loue, friendship, & fellowshipp, ought to be kept among men: for in it he hath commãded al those things which serue to maintaine peace and agreement amongst vs. Briefly, the first Table commandeth all those dueties which man oweth to God. And the later, all that man oweth to man, according to the will of God. For the commandements of the latter Table, are to be referred to the former, that is to say, they ought to be kept, not indeed for our neighbours sake, but for Gods sake, who hath commanded them.

The summe
of the mo-
rall Law.

The first Table of the Lawe.

Theoph. Now we must come to the exposition of the foure commandements of the first Table. I do therefore demand of thee, what order thou thinkest meete to be kept, that the whole matter may be made the plainer?

The order
of the first
Table.

Mat. 1. My aduise is, that in the first place wee expound the Preface set before the Law.

2. Secondly, I will deliuer some generall rules of speciall good vse, to giue light to euery commandement.

3. Which things being let downe, these foure commandements of the first Table shall generally be expounded,

ded, and withall we will obierue, how well they agree one with the other. And at length we will come to the exposition of each commandement by it selfe.

The Preface of the Law.

Heare O Israell, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Ægypt, out of the house of bondage.

Theoph. I will follow the order which thou aduiseft, and will beginne at the preface of the Law. What then is the meaning of it?

Mat. First, the Lord would haue vs attaine to the hearing of the Law, when he saith: Heare Israel.

2. He doth also challenge to himselfe power, and the right of authoritie in these words; I am the Lord: wherein he sheweth, that we owe him obedience as vnto our Lord.

3. But because he requireth of vs, not a constrained but a voluntarie and willing obedience, he allureth vs vnto it, by a reherfall of his loue towards vs, and that is proposited in these words *thy God*, that is to say, which doe embrace thee with good will and fauour.

Finally, he bringeth foorth a notable testimonie of that loue, when he saith; Which brought thee out of the land of Ægypt, out of the house of bondage. In which wordes he declareth the selfe same thing, as if hee should say; I haue deliuered you from the tyrannie of the diuel and sin, that I might bring you to eternall life. For, that temporall benefite in times past bestowed vpon the people of Israel, was a type or figure of the spirituall deliuerance of the Church.

Theoph. But the Lord seemeth not to speake to vs in these words, Heare Israel, but onely to the Israelites that came of *Abraham* and *Iacob*, to whom the name of *Israell* was giuen by the Angell.

Mat. The Apostle witnesseth, that all they that bee of faith, are the childre of *Abrahā*. And therfore in the name of *Israell*, all the faithfull are spoken vnto: and yet not that the vnfaithfull and vnbeleeuers are exempted from keeping of the Law; but because they haue not eares to heare,

Gal. 3. 7.

much lesse an hart to vnderstand, therefore the Lord speaketh not vnto them.

Theoph. I haue attained the sense and meaning of this Preface. Now declare those generall rules, which thou saydest gaue light to the vnderstanding of the Law.

Mat. They be three. The first whereof is this, that when God commaundeth good, hee doth not onely forbid the euill that is contrarie vnto it, which also is done in the lawes of men; but when he forbiddeth euill, he comandeth the good that is contrary vnto it: & this is peculiar or proper to the law of God. For example. When God forbiddeth vs to take his name in vaine, he doth on the contrary side commaund that we hallow and honor it. When hee forbiddeth, that any man steale, he comandeth vs to giue our selues vnto charitie, And so of the rest of the commaundements.

Theoph. Why are almost all the commaundements deuised rather negatiuely then affirmatiuely, that is to say, so as they rather forbid euill, then commaund that which is good?

Mat. Indeede that is well marked of you: for onelic two, namely the last of the first Table, wherein the obseruation of the Saboath day, and the first of the second Table, wherein the honor of parents be commanded, be propounded affirmatiuely, all the rest negatiuely, and so forbid euill. But this was done that we might vnderstand, that no man can giue his minde to that which is good, before he haue laid aside the euill that is contrary to it. Euen as we see that thornes must bee first pulled vp, before good seede be sown. Therefore the Prophet calling the Israelites to repentance, saith; Plough vp your fallow ground, and sowe not among thornes. Morcouer euery where in the holy Scriptures is this order kept, that it first forbiddeth euill, before it commaund good: as where the Prophets say; Cease to doe euill, learne to doe well, decline from euill, and doe that which is good.

Theoph. Let vs come to the second rule.

Mat. The Lord minding to forbid diuerse euill of the same kinde, he comprehended them in the name of the greatest,

1 Cr. 4. 3.

1 Cr. 1. 16.

1 Cr. 14. 15

greatest, and as it were the chiefest, to the end we might know, that the sinnes which seeme to be most small by the iudgement of men, are accounted with God of the same nature with that vnder the which they bee forbidden. As for example. When God would forbid murders, reuenges, iniuries, and priuie hatreds, he comprehended them all vnder the word *murder*, to teach vs, that he which hateth his brother, is a murderer, as *Iohn* saith. The same is to be said of him, which looketh vpon a woman to lust after her: for Christ affirmeth that such a one hath committed adulterie in his hart.

1. Iohn. 3. 15

Mat. 5. 18.

Theoph. The third rule is behind.

Mat. When any vice is forbidden, not onely they bee forbidden that be of the same kinde, but also al the degrees by the which men come vnto them, yea & all such things, which by any means may minister occasion of our falling into such vices. On the contrarie side, when vertue is commanded, all those things also be commaunded, that may draw vs on forward to it.

Theoph. Hauing now deliuered those generall rules, we are to consider the coherence or agreement of the foure commandeméts of the first Table, according to the order which you did prescribe.

Mat. I did therefore set downe this order, because it will bring greater light to each commandement. Thou hast heard already, that in the first Table, God hath commanded the worship due vnto him. Seeing therefore we ought to worship him no lesse in our bodies then in our soules, as he that is creator of both,

How the 4th commandment of the first Table agree together.

In the first commandement, hee setteth out the dutie of our soule: for he sheweth what inward knowledge hee requieth of vs.

In the second, he reformeth the disposition and behaviour of our bodies, in the things which appertaine to his worship. And together condemneth idolatrie, wherein men do chiefly sinne against this commandement.

In the third, he restraineth our speech: for by it we ought also to declare that inward worship.

In the fourth he appointeth a certaine day of the week

wherein these things may be called to practise, as well those before mentioned, as those also which be commanded in the latter Table; and this indeed is the cause, why it is placed between both the Tables.

The first commandement.

Thou shalt haue no other Gods before my face.

Theoph. Let vs at length come to the speciall exposition of the first commandement. What the meaning of it is, it is sufficiently vnderstood by that which hath beene said. Let vs therefore see what be the parts of it, then let vs follow each of them in their order.

Mat. Seeing this commandement is deliuered negatively, by our first rule it containeth the affirmatiue vnder it. Therefore it is to be deuided into two parts.

1. In the first, which is not expressed, he will haue vs to acknowledge him for our God.

2. In the latter, which is indeed expressed, hee forbiddeth that we acknowledge any other for our God, beside himselfe.

Theoph. Of how many parts standeth that acknowledgement which God requireth?

Mat. Vpon foure: namely

1. Adoration, or worship.
2. Trust.
3. Inuocation, or prayer.
4. And thanksgiuing.

Now this acknowledgement proceedeth from knowledge: for he cannot be acknowledged, except he be first knowne.

Theoph. Shew this vnto me in those seuerall parts.

Mat. First wee cannot worshipping him (now, hee is worshipped whe euery one of vs submitteth himself to his greatnesse) ynlesse we also acknowledge him our creator & Lord. We cannot put our trust in him, but we must confesse him to be omnipotent & perfectly good, that hee may helpe our necessities. We will neuer thinke vpon praying and giuing thanks vnto him, except wee be well assured, that he is the fountaine and well-spring of all good things.

Theoph.

Theoph. Are these foure vertues onely included in the first commandement?

Mat. If thou respect the substance, these onely: howbeit many other spring from them. For true adoration or worship, hath alwaies pietie adioyned with it, that is to say, a child-like feare, and willing obedience towards him.

Out of trust, ariseth

1. Hope, that is, a certaine looking for the fruition of the heauenly promises.

2. Patience in aduersitie.

3. Perseuerance or continuance in his seruice.

4. A holy securitie, so long as wee keepe our selues within the bounds of our callings.

From prayer and thankegiuing springeth true humility of hart. For by them we be admonished, that we are empty of all kinde of good things, vntill God bestow them vpon vs, and that if there be any good thing in vs, it is of God. That humility also bringeth forth modesty, which causeth vs not to desire a higher place, but to bee content with the condition whereunto God hath called vs.

Theoph. Forasmuch as we haue reckoned vp the vertues contained in this commandement, now we must oppose or set against them, the vices whereunto they be contrary.

Mat. These are

1. Rebellion against God.

2. Doubting of his promises.

3. Desperation.

4. Impatience in aduersity.

5. Inconstancie in the worship of God, and in our own vocation.

6. Falling away from the trueth of the Gospell.

7. Pride.

8. Disdaine.

9. Ambition.

10. Faint heartednesse in good things, and finally rashnesse, which aduentureth vpon vnecessary dangers, vnder a colour of Gods prouidence.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement, Now in it is forbidden, that we acknowledge

any

The latter
part of the
first com-
mandement

any other but the true God. How doe we fall into this sin?

Mat. When we giue vnto creatures those foure points, or any of them: for then we make them our Gods, when we ascribe the things vnto them, which appertain to one God. Therefore in this commaundement the Lord saith not; Thou shalt acknowledge me for thy God; but, Thou shalt haue no other Gods before me: but in these wordes hee compriseth three things :

First, that we ought to haue one God.

Secondly, that himselfe is he, whom we are to acknowledge for our God, euen as it is plainly expressed by him in the Preface, in these words, I am the Lord thy God.

Thirdly, that it is not sufficient if wee acknowledge him for our God, except we acknowledge him alone, so as wee ioyne no other Gods as it were fellowes vnto him, which they do especially, that pray vnto Saints, & put their trust in them, whatsoeuer they may pretend, or howsoeuer they may seek to shift the matter.

Theoph. Is it not also forbidden, that we should in any case put our trust in the liuing? as for example, in our kinsfolkes and friends, to craue their helpe if neede bee, or to giue the thanks for the benefits which we haue receiued?

Mat. No not so, so as we acknowledge them onely as instruments, by which God will helpe vs, and that they haue their will & abilitie to do vs good from God: for then wee put not our trust in the creature, but in the Creator himselfe, in whome onely we confesse is power to helpe vs: without whome men can haue no helpe at all for vs. Notwithstanding it is meete, that we do giue them thāks, so often as we receiue any benefite from them, so long as we remember that the chief thanks are to be reserued vnto God, the true giuer of all gifts.

Theoph. What if we put our trust in creatures more then in the Creator?

Coloss. 3. 5. *Mat.* Then be they our Gods: therefore *Paule* speaking of couetousnesse, calleth it idolatrie: by which words hee meaneth, that couetous men make their riches their Gods, because they trust in them more then in God himselfe.

Selfe. Which indeede is not onely true in that, but also as oft as we preferre any other creature before the Creator, whether we feare, loue, or obey it more: for then we make it our God. Therefore *Paul* speaking of such, who, that they may liue daintily and securely, cast off the seruice of God, saith; their God is their belly.

Phil. 3. 19.

Theoph. I thinke that to be the meaning of Christ, when he saith; Call no man your father on the earth, for one is your father which is in heauen. *Mat. 23. 9.*

Mat. It is so indeed. for in those words he doth not onely warne vs to acknowledge God for the chiefe father, but especially to loue, feare, and worship him far aboue our earthly parents, and all other that be set ouer vs.

Theoph. Now doe I vnderstand in what manner wee should seeke for helpe at the hands of men, and trust in them without diminishing the honor of God. But what letteth vs, that we may not do the same towards the Saints who are already receiued into heauē, that is to say, cal vpon them, & in some sort put our trust in them, vpon conditiō, that we take them as instruments appointed of God for our helpe?

Mat. God verilie giueth this abilitie to those that be aliue, yea he hath commanded that one should helpe another: but this cannot bee in the dead: for *Salomon* saith; Also their loue, and their hatred, and their enuy is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the sunne. *Eccles. 9. 6.*

Theoph. How knowest thou, that God hath not giuen this power to the dead, to be able to helpe vs, & that therefore we ought not to pray vnto them, when any necessitie presseth vs?

Mat. There is no one example of this in all the Scripture, which notwithstanding is the most certaine rule of truth. Morcouer it teacheth vs, that God onely knoweth the things that be absent, and vnderstandeth the heart of man, so as he heareth and fauourably heareth our prayers and complaints, and helpeth vs. *Ier. 17. 10. Psal. 7. 10.*

Wherefore no man can call vpon the dead, or can any way trust in them, but hee taketh away the honour due vnto

vnto God, which he giueth vnto them, and therefore maketh them his God.

Psal. 91. 11
Heb. 1. 14.

Theoph. If it will be none otherwise, the things which haue bene spoken of the dead seeme not to appertain vnto the Angels, specially seeing that it is manifest by the testimony of the Scripture, that God oftentimes useth their seruice to helpe vs, and that they be conuersant amongst vs, so as they may heare our prayers.

Therefore it shall be no hurt, if we call vpon them to helpe vs, as we do vpon the liuing, yet with this condition, that we take them onely for his instruments appointed by himselfe.

Rom. 14. 23

Mat. Thou gatherest ill, for they cannot helpe vs saue in those things which God hath expressly commaunded them, which indeede bee vnknowne vnto vs. But so far as much as they do most readily performe the things they be commaunded, it is not necessarie to call vpon them, although we our selues knew those things. Howbeit it is altogether necessarie to speake to the liuing here vpon the earth, because for the most part they scarce yeeld any help except they be so called vpon, that it trouble them. But whereas thou sayedst, that the Angels be amongst vs, do vnderstand what we need, and heare our prayers, it is indeed true. Neuertheless they cannot be euery where, nor know all things, for that is proper to God onely: which is a cause that wee ought not to pray vnto them. But although all the things which we haue alledged were of no force, there is no commandement of it in all the Scripture, nor any example whereby we may be enformed, that worshiping of Angels is pleasing to God. And *Paule* affirmeth, that whatsoeuer is done without faith is sinne.

Theoph. Now the exposition of this commaundement wanteth this one thing, that thou shew why these words be added, In my sight, or before me.

Mat. That he might more and more keepe vs from the transgressing of it, while he teacheth how great iniury is done to his Maiestie, when we dare commit so hainous an offence euen in his presence. For, although impiety and vngodlinesse be hidden in the heart, yet it is manifest

to the eyes of the Lord, whereunto all things are naked & open, saith the Apostle. It is therefore as if an vn honest woman should prouoke and set on fire the mind of her husband, by bringing before his face the party with whom she playeth the harlot, and by committing of the very act of vncleannesse in his presence.

Heb. 4. 13.

The second Commandement.

Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen Image, nor the likenesse of the things that be in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath, nor of the things that be in the waters vnder the earth. Thou shalt not bow downe to them, nor worship them. For I the Lord thy God am a iealous God, visiting the sinnes of the fathers vpon the children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy to thousandes of them that loue me and keepe my commandements.

Theoph. Thou hast satisfied me concerning the first commandement: let vs goe forward to the second. How many parts hath it?

Mat. Three.

1. The first of the forbidding of the things wherein a man may sin in the outward worship due vnto God.

2. The second is of things commanded, which are to be performed in the profession of that worship, which is don by the outward behaviour of the body: and this precept is comprehended vnder the prohibition by the first generall rule.

3. The third containeth threatnings against the breakers of the law, and setteth before vs a promise to such as keepe it.

Theoph. Let vs in the first place consider of that prohibition.

Mat. It is contained in these words: Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, neither any likenesse of the things that be in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath, nor of the things that bee in the waters vnder the earth. Thou shalt not bowe downe to them, nor worship them.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why, after the words, Thou shalt make thee no grauen image, is it presently added, nor any likenesse?

Mat. It is, that we may know, that pictures painted, or any other kinde of images, be forbidden of God, no lesse the grauen images, which are by name mentioned.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou, by the things that are in heauen?

Mat. The Sunne, Moone, Starres, birds: and vnder the things that be vpon the earth are comprehended, men, brute beasts, plants, trees: and finally by those that be in the waters, fishes. Moreouer the waters, that is the sea, are said to be vnder the earth, in respect of men that do inhabit it: for otherwise the sea together with the earth, make a globe, wherof there is not one part higher or lower than another.

Theoph. Why should God thus reckē vp all his creatures?

Mat. Because there was no kinde of them, which the heathen did not at that time abuse to idolatry: which custome the Iewes themselues followed, notwithstanding this prohibition giuen them.

*Ezech. 8. 2.
3. &c.*

Theoph. But in this place there is no mention of spirituall and heauenly things, whereof neuerthelesse there is very often abuse among the heathen to idolatry.

Mat. True. But here is no mention of them, because they cannot be represented, but by borrowing the forme or shape of the visible things, which in this place are reckoned vp. Therefore vnder the visible, the inuisible also are comprehended.

Theoph. But are all kindes of pictures & images forbidden of God?

Mat. They are vtterly condemned, if they be made to represent his maiesty: for that is directly forbidden by him.

*Deut. 4. 15.
Act. 17. 23.*

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because it cannot be done but to the contempt of his diuine Maiesty, forasmuch as he which is eternall, infinite, without body, & inuisible, is represented in the likenesse of a fraile & transitory creature, finite, hauing a body, & being visible. For this cause Esay going about to reprove the madnesse of the idolaters of his time, that did

Set forth God in a visible shape, describeth his wonderfull greatnesse, howbeit in termes agreeable to our capacity, *Esa. 40. 12.* whē he saith: Who hath measured the waters in the fist, & cōpassed heauen with the span, & comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountaines in a waight, and the hils in a ballance? And a little after hee addeth: To whom then will yee make God like, or what similitude will yee set vp vnto him? *Esa. 40. 18*

Theoph. I graunt that God is not to be set out in any visible shape: but why may it not be lawfull so to represent things created?

Mat. It is lawfull: so long as it is not done to adore or worship them: which the Lord straightway addeth after the forbidding of making images, in these words: Thou shalt not bow downe to them, nor worship them.

Theoph. Thinkest thou that it is all one for a man to bow himselfe to idols, and to adore or worship them?

Mat. Yea verily. For adoration signifieth all religious worship: but no man boweth himselfe to idols, but with religious worship.

The. What vnderstandest thou by the name of worship?

Mat. That they be not apparelled and decked; that incense be not burnt to them, temples built, altars set vp, holy dayes kept, and such like.

Theoph. Therefore it is lawfull to haue any images, so as it be not to adoration and worship, except those that bee made to represent God.

Mat. All religious images be also to be excepted, by the precept of our third rule, lest men abuse them to idolatry, being of their owne nature aboue measure prone to that wickednesse. Which thing gaue *Iohn* occasion that in the end of his Epistle, he ioyned this admonition: Babes keepe your selues from Idols, that is, from images made for religious vse. *1. Iohn. 5. 23*

Theoph. But they may teach the ignorant people, according to the common speech: Images are vnlearned mens bookes.

Mat. They be indeede the bookes of the vnlearned: For they can teach nothing but vanitie and lying; as the Scrip.

Gal. 3. 1.

Scripture testifieth: and therefore they hold men in ignorance, and make them idiots and vnlearned, which experience it selfe proueth. But the most sure way whereby all the faithful of what degree soeuer, may be taught, and that with profit, is that which the Lord himselfe hath appointed: that is, the preaching of his word, by the which *Paule* saith, that Christ is painted before our eyes.

Theoph. Let vs go forward: Is there no euill forbidden in the commandement, besides the adoration and worshipping of Images?

Mat. Two other besides be forbidden, namely

1. Worshipping of creatures: and
2. Superstition.

Theoph. What cause hast thou to say, that these two euils be forbidden in this commandement?

Mat. Because they be of the same kinde with idolatry: for they tend hereunto, to declare by the outward gesture of the body, the worship which they thinke they giue vnto God. Whereupon it is that these two bee called by the name of idolatry.

Theoph. Right. For both the worshippers of creatures & superstitious persons, haue accustomedly ben called idolaters, as well as the worshippers of idols.

Mat. And verily they be ioyned together, by a most neere bond: for idolatry alwaies accompanieth the worshipping of creatures, and bringeth forth sundry superstitions.

Of the adoration of creatures,

Theoph. Let vs speake of these two euils: What vnderstandest thou by the adoration of creatures?

Mat. The religious worship, which is giuen vnto them,

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because adoration belongeth onely vnto God, wherof the Scripture it selfe is a plentifull witnesse. Whereupon it followeth, that we can bestow neuer so little of it vpon any creature, whether it be visible or inuisible, of what condition soeuer, but we do take from and diminish the worship due to the Creator. I therefore the Angel said vnto *Iohn*, which had fallen downe at his feet to worship him; See thou do it not, I am thy fellow seruant, one of thy brethren

Apo. 19. 10

brethren : worship God.

Theoph. But dost thou comprehend vnder that prohibition, the worship and reuerence which is vsually giuen to men that be aliue?

Mat. No verily, so long as it be onely ciuill: for, if there be neuer so little affection mingled tending to religion, it is corrupt, and displeaseth God. For this cause *Peter* refused the reuerence which *Cornelius* did to him: for the holy Apostle perceiued, that that reuerence was not meely ciuill, but had mixed with it some fauoring of Religion. Now if it be vnlawfull to worship Saints yea the very Angels themselues, how much more vnlawful is it to worship their images, reliques, the crosse of Christ, the likenesse of it, and such like? *Act. 10. 25.*

Theoph. Let vs come to superstition: what meanest thou by this word? Superstition

Mat. It is called Superstition, when any worshippeth God by rites or ceremonies deuised of men. Of this sorte are

1. To weare a certaine kinde of apparell for Religion sake.
2. To hold difference of place in worshipping God.
3. To obiectue daies and times for that purpose.
4. To make a difference of meates.
5. To abstaine from mariage: and such other inuentions

of men, whereof *Paule* thus speaketh, Which things haue indeede a shew of wisdom, in voluntary religion, & humbleness of minde, and in not sparing of the body, yet they are not any thing worth. Yea rather they are to the contempt of God, and hinder our saluation. *Col. 2. 23.*

Theo. How are they to the contempt of God?

Mat. Because he preferreth obedience before sacrifice, and will be worshipped not after the inuentions of men, but according to his owne will, which hee hath therefore made knowne vnto vs. Therefore Christ said to the Scribes and Pharisees, They worship me in vaine, teaching doctrines that be the commandements of men. Moreover, superstitions bring in the contempt of Gods commandements, and of that worship, which hee requireth of vs to

Mat. 15. 9.

performe unto him, which experience doth plentifully
preue.

Theoph. But how do superstitions hinder our saluation?

1.Tim.4.

Mat. Because superstitious persons imagine, that they
merit somewhat by them; which imagination turneth me
from Christ, and therefore from their owne saluation. For
that cause *Paule* calleth the forbidding of meates and of
marriage, the doctrine of diuels. It is therefore a great
deale better to goe on slowly in the waies of the Lord,
then to runne apace in the waies of superstition: which
whosoever hath entred into, the further he goeth forward
the further he goeth from God, and therefore from eter-
nall life.

Theoph. Now I vnderstand what superstition is.

But, seing there be thrce euils, by the which the wor-
ship of God is defiled, I demãd why idolatry only is short-
ly touched in this commandement?

Mat. It is according to our second rule, namely, that
God when he meaneth to forbid many sinnes of the same
kinde, forbiddeth them all vnder the name of one, & that
the greatest, such a one as idolatry is.

Theoph. Why thinkest thou idolatry to be a greater sin,
then the worshipping of creatures, or superstition?

Psal. 115.4

Mat. The reason in my iudgement is most plaine. For
although a man be mad already, when he forsaketh God,
for some excellent gifts wherewith any creature hath bin
adorned of God, and worshipping that creature: yet then
he may be saide to be sore vexed with madnesse and out-
rage when he worshipping an idoll, made by the industry
of man. Therefore the Scripture describing that vanitie,
calleth idolls the workes of mens hands, and presently af-
ter addeth: **They haue a mouth and speake not; they haue
eyes and see not; they haue eares and heare not; they
haue noses and smell not; they haue handes and handle
not; they haue feete and walke not; and finally that
they be dead. In which words he signifieth, that men be
altogether out of their wits, which worshippe the worke
of mans hands, an image, dumbe, blinde, deafe, that
vnderstandeth nothing, and is void of all the senses,**
and

and therefore inferior to his maker and worshipping: which appeareth euen by this, that neither of them woulde bee like their idoll.

Theoph. But they that worship Images, will not graunt thee that thou saiest, namely that they worship the images; much lesse take them for Gods. For they say, they be not so void of reaso, but they know, they be either of wood, or stones, or of painting. But rather they asfirme boldly and constantly, that all the worship which they do, tendeth to the honour of God, or of the Saints, wherof they bee images.

Against worshipping of Idols.

Mat. What though we should graunt them all that they say? were not this extreame madnesse, that they will worship God, by doing the things which he directly forbidde? which also he affirmeth to be despight against him? But howeouer they deny it, it is so. For when they prefer one idoll before another, and for religions sake take vpon them long pilgrimages to salute such an image, and doe mumble their prayers before them, euen as for that purpose they haue many images with them: it is clearer then the light, that they think there is in them some diuine power. And therefore they be conuined that they take those images for Gods. Whereupon *Esay* most sharply reprocued the Idolaters of his time, although they euen then sought the same flits. So is the Deuill wont to bewitch all those, that receiue idols for religions sake: for at the beginning indeed, he perswadeth them, that they bee receiued that God may be worshipped in them; but by little and little; he blindeth them with their mad religion, so as at the length they both worship them, and put their trust in the. And indeed (as *A. Sin* said most truly) no man looking vpon images, can do them any worship, who is not verily perswaded in his heart, that they heare him.

Esa. 44. 17.

For this cause, the Fathers of the Elibertine Councell, the yeare from the birth of Christ 330. decreede thus concerning this matter; It is ordained that no pictures bee had in Churches, least that which is honoured and worshipped, be painted on the wals; against those which then woulde haue images placed in Churches.

*Cap. 6. 3.
Can. 31.*

Theoph. How then came it to passe, that afterward they were receiued into Churches?

Mat. It was decreed after many contentions and iarres in the last Councell of *Nice*, about the yeare 754. when the Diuell had before brought in many superstitions into the Church: But it lacked images all the time, from the coming of Iesus Christ, vntill that Councell.

Theoph. Truly I am glad, that in going ouer these things, I haue learned at what time images were brought into the Church. Now I will returne againe to the order of our speech. Thou saidest, that in former times the olde Idolaters vsed the same excuses to defend their Idolatries, which the Idolaters of our time doe vse now: who doe specially complaine of this, that they haue very great wrong done them, when they be compared with those ancients, forasmuch as there is great difference betweene themselves and the other.

Mat. If it shall seeme good vnto thee to propound the things, wherein they say that difference is, I will cause thee to vnderstand, that whatsoeuer they alleadge is most vaine: and moreouer, that the Idolatry of our time, is altogether the same, with that ancient Idolatry of the heathen and Iewes.

Th. It shal very much please me to heare that of thee. But they make foure principal points or heads of that difference.

1. First, that those auncients, both Heathens & Iewes, (say they) beleeued their Images to be Gods, which we do not beleeu.

The excuses
of the new-
er Idolaters.

2. Secondly, they worshipped many gods, wee onely one.

3. Thirdly, because they worshipped the images of things without sence & reason, or else of most wicked men & women, as Iupiter, Mars, Venus, & many other such like: and those Images (say they) be forbidden in this commandment, but not the Images which we worship, as of Christ, the virgin *Mary*, & of the Saints that now liue most blessedly in heauen.

4. Fourthly and last of all, wee giue not that diuine worshippinge

worship to our images, which in former times the Idolaters gaue to their idols & fained gods. Vpon which things they gather, that indeed those auncients are worthily called and esteemed idolaters: but that they haue great iniurie done vnto them, when they be charged with this fault, from the which they thinke themselves free, vpon the reasons which I haue reckned vp.

Mat. I will answere in order vnto these foure points.

1. First, they be fowlyly deceiued in this, that they thinke those olde idolaters beleueed their idols to be Gods: for they changed them according to their pleasure, but they alwaies kept the same gods in their minde.

The answer to the excuses of the newer idolaters.

2. Moreouer, there was no God of theirs, which had not many images: and yet they did not according to that multitude, make to themselves many Gods.

3. Finally, they did dayly consecrate new images: yet had they no purpose & intent to make new gods. Whereupon it is plaine, that they were not so blockish & without sence to beleue, that an idoll of stone, or of wood, or of gold, or of siluer, was the very essence of God: but onely a similitude or likenesse of God.

It is indeed certaine, that the Prophets sometimes re- prooued the Israelites for this, that they said to their idols: Thou art my God. But this was done for the cause which I spake of before: namely, for that, giuing to images the honor due vnto God alone, they esteemed them as God, although they coloured that idolatrie with faire excuses.

Theoph. Concerning the first point, thou hast sufficiently satisfied me. Let vs therefore come to the second; namely, that the Heathen had many gods.

Mat. That indeede is true, but they did neuer esteeme them alike; but rather constantlie continued in this mind, that there was one chiefe God, to whom all the rest were subiect. For, so is the feeling of one God-head engrauen in the mindes of men, that it cannot be pluckt out, albeit it be corrupted by their own witlesse inuentions, and that more is, by their idolatrie, as *Paule* saith to the Ro-
mans. *Rom. 1.*

Therefore the other Gods, whome they adored besides that chiefe God, were for this end worshipped, that they might be their patrons: which selfe same thing they also do at this day which adore men Saints, & women Saints. For they take them in the stead of their Gods, when they giue that worshippe to their reliques and images, which is due vnto one highest God.

Theoph. Let vs now come to the third point : and it is this; That the prohibition which is contained in this commaundement, is vnderstoode onelie of those idols, which are the likenesses of fained Gods, which the old Ethnicks and Iewes, being idolaters, did worship, & that it doth not extend to the Images of the Saints that bee in heauen.

Mat. This distinction is most false: for *ειδωλον* in Greck, is altogether the same, that Image is in Latine. But both doe signifie the likenesses which are made vpon foolish deuotion. Whereupon it is, that they who worshipping them are called *ειδωλολάτραι*, that is, worshippers of Idols or Images.

But let vs graunt there is that difference or diuersitie betweene these words which they affirme, what will it make for them? forasmuch as there is so generall a prohibition in this commaundement, Thou shalt make to thy selfe no grauen image, neither any likeness of the things &c. that it admitteth no exception or restraint. For it doth plainelie comprehend euerie religious likeness of all things, aswell liuing as without sense, reasonable or unreasonable, men and women, aswell which now liue blessedly in heauen, as of the wicked, which now suffer the tormentes of their sinnes in hell. For the difference of the things, to which the worshippe due to God, is giuen, taketh not away the reproche and iniurie done vnto God.

Theoph. Now what answerest thou to the last point, namely, that they giue not the same worship to their idols, which in times past the auncient Ethnicks gaue to their fained Gods?

Mat. I answer, that they be altogether alike: which shall plainly

plainely appeare, if we do a little more diligently look in-
to both, and make a comparifon between them.

1. The Ethnicks facrificed to their idols: fo alfo doe the Idolaters of our time. For they fay Maffes, (which they hold to be facrifices) to the honour of Saints, yea at their Altars.

A compa-
ring of the
old & new
Idolaters.

2. They offered them gifts, and fo alfo do our Idolaters.

3. They faluted them, they fell down vpon their knees before them, and finally made their prayers vnto them. Which thing alfo is diligently obferued and done by the idolaters of our time.

4. They called vpon some for the plague, vpon other some for the fafe deliuerance of women, other some for tempeftes vpon the fea, other some to obtaine raine, and other some for faire weather: fo alfo do our idolaters.

5. They apparelled them, they fet vp lights to them, they burnt incenfe: the fame alfo do our idolaters.

6. They caried them about in their folemne fup-
plications, they followed them moft deuoutly, beeing caried vpon mens foulders, and to this purpofe, that they might obtaine their requests. The fame alfo is vfed among our Idolaters.

7. They appointed vnto them formes of prayers and worfhippe, they built them Churches, and ordained Priettes, of whom their feruice might be done: fo alfo doe ours.

8. They fought high places, and places vnreforted to by men, planted with trees, wherein they built the chappels of their idols. By meanes whereof, wretched men (made drunk with blind deuotion) were fo out of their wits, that there was very great refort of people vnto them, no other-
wife then as if God himfelfe had bene present there. The Idolaters of our time haue carefully done all thefe things to the very felfe fame end.

9. In each Citie and towne one was chofen, to be the patron of the place, and the protecting God. The fame alfo do ours.

10. They swore by their names, and had them continually in their mouth, and alwaies caried about with them

their images to worship. The same also do our idolaters. To conclude, at length the names of the idols were changed, but the same idolatrie is still retained.

But wee must diligently marke the craft of Sathan in this behalfe. For, to the end hee might restore or bring in againe the olde idolatrie, he hath borrowed the names of the holy Apostles and Martyrs, by whome in former times it was ouerthrowne and driuen away, and by this meanes it hath put on another person, that it might not be knowne.

Touph. I haue taken no small pleasure by that which thou hast spoken vpon these foure points. Now, that our speech may end there where it begunne, I doe acknowledge that the Diuell, which in our age hath brought in againe the ancient idolatry, vpholdeth it by no other arguments, than those wherewith in former times it was detened by him.

Mat. It is euen so. For, whereas the Idolaters of our age, deuising a worship of God and images of Saints, pretende and say, that the remembrance of God is the better engrauen in their minds, the selfe same thing was pretended by those old idolaters.

Theoph. It is very likely that men euen from the beginning were by these two reasons inuoued to idolatrie: namelie that both they might worship God better, & deeply fasten the remembrance of him in their minds.

Mat. But there is nothing which is more to the dishonour of God, and more putteth him out of the minds of men, then idolatrie.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because there can bee no greater despite done to God, then (contrarie to his expresse forbidding) to giue the worship due to him, vnto dumbe & dead images, which also we may liken to fetters, snares, or gins, wherewith men be held fast vpon the ground, being lets and hinderances to their minds, that they look not vpto heauen, neither come to God with true knowledge and remembrance of him.

Theoph. I desire, if it shall not be troublesome to you,

to alledge three obiections, wherewith idolaters labour to defend themselves: not that I make any doubt of things so plaine, but to the end I may be able fitly to answer the aduerfaries, if at any time I haue occasion.

Mat. Thou shalt not trouble me, though thou enlarge this speech: for I am much delighted when any occasion is giuen me, to discouer the craft of the diuell; who, vnder colour of Religion and worshipping of God, bringeth it to passe, that hee himselfe is worshipped of idolaters. Therefore propound those obiections.

Theoph. The first of them is this, that they giue not to the images the adoration or worshipping due vnto God: For they say, they giue to images onelie that worship which they call *δωδία*, and that they doe reserve *λατρία* vnto God.

The first obiection of the Idolaters of our time.

Mat. This distinction is nothing else but a matter faigned of the Greekes, as it may appeare by the words themselves being Greeke, wherewith they might cloke the vngodlines of the idolatrie brought into the Church by them. Howbeit by this distinction they meant that they worshipped God, and serued the images. But their deedes declare that the matter is far otherwise. For if it were their purpose to worship the images with the worship which they say is to be reserved for god, what would they do more seeing they fall down vpon their knees, and most deuoutly salute them whensoever they come in their sight.

The answer to it.

But let vs grant that the idols (as they say) bee not worshipped, but serued of the, are they not in expresse wordes condemned of God by the prohibition of this commandment, when after these words; *Thou shalt not bow downe to them*, the Lord straight way addeth, Neither shalt thou serue them? Which things being so, it is plaine that this distinction is most friuolous, and that it is onely in words, by the which they would blind the eies of the simple, especially seeing it is certaine that the Scripture vseth those words, *δωδία* and *λατρία* for the selfe same thing, and attributeth both of them vnto God.

Rom. I 9 & 7. 6. & 12.

Theoph. Now I come to their other obiection, which is of the Cherubines, and the brasen Serpent, that were made

II. The second obiection.

made

Exod. 25. 18 made by God his owne commandement. The Cherubins
Num. 21. 8 to couer the Arke of the couenant, but the brasen serpent
 was set vp in the wildernesse, that such as were stung by
 the byting of the serpents, by the sight thereof might be
 healed, and deliuered from present death. And from hence
 they will conclude, that it is lawfull to haue Images in
 Churches.

Mat. These examples doe not any thing at all serue
 The answer. their turne. For God himselfe had commanded the Cherubins, as also the brasen Serpent, not indeede to be adored or worshipped, but to represent or signifie some things fit for that time, when the Ceremoniall law was in vse. For the Cherubins were in that holie inner place, which is called the holiest of all, out of the sight of all, saue onely of the high Priest, who went into it once euery yeare: so as all occasion of abusing them was taken away. Concerning the brasen Serpent, *Ezechias* is specially commended of the holie Ghost, for that hee brake it, because after a sort it was worshipped of the people. Now therefore with what face dare they alledge these examples to vphold their Images, set vp contrarie to the expresse commandement of God! seeing especially there is so filthy an abuse of them vnto all kind of idolatric.

2. Kin. 18. 4

Theoph. But what did the Cherubins, and the brasen serpent signifie?

Mat. Euery Cherubin had foure wings: with two they couered their face, whereby was taught, that the Angels themselves be so stricken with that brightnesse of the diuine Maiestic, that they cannot endure it, and so bee compelled to couer their faces: with the other two wings they couered the mercie seate which was vpon the Arke, to instruct vs that God is incomprehensible, and therefore ought not to bee represented by any humane likenesse. Touching the brasen Serpent, God signified by it, that all they whom that olde Serpent (namelic the deuill, with whose poyson, and that indeede deadly, wee are infected through sinne) had bitten, were healed, so as by faith they do flie vnto Christs death. For the brasen Serpent was a figure

figure of Christ, as the Lord himselfe teacheth in these words; As *Moses* lifted vp the Serpent in the wilderness, so must the Sonne of man be lifted vp, that whosoeuer beleeueth in him should not perish, but haue life euerlasting. *Iohn.3.14.*

Theoph. I am satisfied for the second obiection: the third is behind, wherein they alledge almost innumerable miracles, which were wrought in fauoure of the worshippers of idols, and for the punishment of such as despise them. *The third obiection.*

Theoph. Although I might most worthily reiect the greatest part of those miracles as false and fained, yet will I graunt this, that they may bee all taken for miracles in deede. But what can they build with them? might not the heathen boast the selfe same thing of their idols? Let prophane histories be read, they wil afford infinite examples of those things, neither indeede is it maruell. For, the diuell, to the end he might establish his own false doctrine, would therein follow God. *The answer.*

Theoph. How?

Mat. As God when hee meant to open his truth vnto men, sent forth true Prophets and Apostles to preach it, and furnished them with the power of the holie Ghost, that they might confirme it by sundrie miracles: So the diuell the father of lies assayed the same thing, when hee would bring in idolatrie & superstition into the world. For, he raised vp false Prophets and Apostles to preach it, and gaue them the power of working miracles, for the confirmation of it. Hereupon it is, that Christ warneth vs, diligently to take heede of false Prophets, who (saith he) shall do great signes and miracles, so as they shall deceiue (if it were possible) the very elect. Whereunto also may be applied the saying of the Apostle speaking of Antichrist; Whose comming is by the working of Sathan, with all power, and signes, and lying wonders. *Valcr. Max. lib. 1. cap. 2.*

Theoph. Why doth the Apostle cal them lying wonders?

Mat. Not so much to note the falselhood of them, as to giue vs to vnderstand of the ende whereat those miracles doe shoot. And that is to confirme most false and lying doctrine, such as are idolatrie and superstition, which are directly

directly contrary to Gods word, which indeed ought to be vnto vs in steed of a touch stone, whereby to discerne true miracles from false; that wee bee not deceiued by them.

Theoph. Thou thinkest therefore that all miracles, which serue to confirme false doctrine, are wrought by the diuel, & are therefore to be refused as lyes, and done to deceiue.

Mat. I thinke so. And for this cause, doth the Lord
Dent. 13. 1. warne vs by Moses, if there arise in the middst of vs a
2. 3. Prophet, that foresheweth things to come or sheweth anie other signes with purpose to turne vs aside from his worship, that we do not heare such a prophet. For the Lord your God (saith he) prooueth you, to see whether you loue him with all your heart.

Theoph. But how can the diuell haue the power to work miracles, which appertaineth only to God?

Mat. The Lord looseth the bridle vnto him, and giueth that power, that so he may auenge himselfe, vpon those
2. Thef. 2. 11 which despise & refuse his truth: of whom *Paule* thus writeth; Therefore will the Lord send them strong delusions, that they may beleue lyes.

Theoph. Thou hast now satisfied me concerning the first part of this commandemēt: and those abuses haue bin discussed in it, which are wont to bee brought into the worship of God, but chiefly the greatest among them, namelic idolatry. It remaineth therefore that we come to the other
The other part of the 2. commandement, part, to the end we may know, what is to bee done in the outward seruice of God, that is framed according to his owne will.

Mat. That is, when worship is giuen him both agreeable to his nature, and acceptable to his Maiestie.

Theoph. What is that worship or adoration agreeable to the nature of God?

Mat. It is taught of Christ himselfe: speaking to that woman of Samaria, when he saith, The houre commeth, & now is, whe the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit & truth: for the Father requireth ene such to worships him. Now he opposeth or setteth spirituall worships
Of spirituall worship.
Ioh. 4. 23. which

which God requireth, against carnall worship deuised by men: which, because it is answerable to their carnall and corrupt nature, maruellously pleaseth theiuelues, but doth most highly please God that is a spirit. Yea indecde no worship but spirituall is acceptable vnto him.

Theoph. Now it is to be seene, wherein that adoration or spirituall worship standeth.

Mat. Sincere prayer is the chiefe part of it, whether it be publike or priuate, when our hearts be lifted vp to God with a pure conscience, all things being taken away, that may withdraw or estāge our minds from him, as images, candles, and such other inuentions of men, falling downe vpon our knees, our heads vncouered, and hands lifted vp to heauen.

Theoph. Are not kneeling, vncouering of the head, and lifting the hands vp to heauen, carnall ceremonies?

Mat. No in no wise. For we call them carnall ceremonies, that were deuised by men, and such as tye our minds to these earthly things: but these are both ordained of God, and so bring forth farre diuers or vnlike effects. For they call our minds from these earthly and fraile things, and doe lift them vp to true piety, and spirituall meditation.

Theoph. Is there nothing else required to worship God spiritually, besides the things which thou hast reckened vp?

Mat. There is somewhat else required: namely, that we do heare his word and receiue the Sacraments with humblenesse & reuerence of mind, and with purity of conscience. Concerning the rest, so as we auoid all superstitious and humane ceremonies, we must vse the liberty which Christ by his death hath purchased for vs.

Theoph. What is that Christian liberty?

Mat. It is in euery part of it, a spirituall thing, the whole Of Christian force whereof standeth in the appeasing, and quieting of liberty. fearefull consciences, that God may be so much the more earnestly glorified of vs. And indeed it consisteth of foure parts, the first two wherof (although they be the chiefe) do not make much for that we haue in hand: they were also hand.

handled by vs in the former booke, yea rather they be the argument of it.

Theoph. Neuerthelesse I would haue you declare them in a fewe words, that so I might call to minde the things that haue bene already spoken of before.

1. *Mat.* The first is, an effect of our redemption: namely, that Christ hauing by his death redeemed vs from the slavery and tyranny of the diuell, hath brought vs into the most happy liberty of his kingdome. For by it wee be taken for the sonnes of God, and therfore heires of his kingdome. For this cause Christ said to the Iewes, The seruant abideth nor for euer in the house, but the son abideth for euer. Therefore if the sonne haue freed you, you shall bee free indeed.

John. 8. 35.

2. The other part hangeth on the former, and it is a fruite of our regeneration, by the which when Christ hath set vs free from the seruitude of sinne, wee are restored into libertie by his spirite, so as both wee haue will, and ability from the heart to serue God. Therefore the

2. Cor. 3. 17

Apostle saith: Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Theoph. Declare the other parts of Christian liberty, appertaining to the speech we haue in hand.

3. *Mat.* Either of them hangeth vpon our redemption. Now the first is this; that Christ by his death hauing put an end to all the ceremonies (which were nothing else but shadowes and figures) he hath deliuered vs from the bondage of them, to the end we might offer vnto him a worship meereley or altogether spirituall.

Col. 2. 16.

Heb. 10. 1.

But if we be deliuered from all those Ceremonies which were commanded of God, by farre stronger reason are we set free from those, which were inuented by men, which also haue in them plaine superstition.

The last part standeth herein, that by the death of Christ, the lawfull vse of the creatures, which we had lost in *Adam* through sinne, is againe restored and renewed vnto vs.

4.
Of the vse
of meates
and other
things.

Theoph. How commeth that to passe?

Mat. Men by sinne became the enemies of God, and there-

therefore vnworthy to vse the good things of God; but being reconciled to him by the death of his Son, & adopted or taken to be his sons, we may now with liberty of conscience vse all the blessings of the earth and other creatures which he giueth vs to sustain our life, to the end we might so much the more earnestly serue & worship him, vntill he translate vs from this life into that eternall inheritance.

Hence is that of *Paule*: To the pure indeed all things are pure; but to the vncleane & vnbeleeuers nothing is pure. *Tit. 1. 5.*

By which things it appeareth that Christian liberty doth by no meanes loose the bridle to our carnall desires, but standeth only in this, to bring peace to troubled consciences, whether they be out of quiet, & full of care about the forgiuenesse of their sins, or else be troubled about the vse of the creatures, & of other indifferent things, so as they may vse them most freely, without any doubt or scruple of conscience.

Theoph. But the vse of the creatures & of indifferent things, seemeth not to auaille much to the quieting of our conscience, much lesse to the spirituall worship of God, whereunto notwithstanding you did ascribe it.

Mat. It profiteth much vnto both: and indeed first of al except we do certainly know that we may freely vse the creatures of God, our consciences shall neuer haue rest, yea rather they shal wauer & be tolled to & fro with doubting and superstition. Therefore *Paule* saith, Blessed is hee that condemneth not himselfe in that which he alloweth: *Rom. 14. 22* that is to say, which is certainly perswaded with himselfe, what is allowed or disallowed of God.

Concerning the spirituall worship due vnto God, as it is defiled by a superstitious abstaining from the creatures, so by the lawful vse of the in his feare, & without offence, it is much augmented; yea rather in this part, there is a certain testimony of the spirituall worship which we desire to giue vnto him, when as we will not submit our selues to the superstitious commandements of men. Therefore *Paul* speaking of his Christian liberty, saith: In the liberty wherewith Christ hath made vs free, continue or stand you, & be not againe entangled with the yoke of bondage. *Gal. 5. 1.*

Theoph. What meantest thou, when thou saidest, wee were to vse the creatures of God in his feare?

Mat. That is to say, soberly and reuerently, as it were before him.

Theoph. Why madest thou mention of offense?

Mat. Because it must specially bee taken heede vnto, that by our liberty we giue no offence to the weake. For the doctrine of Christian liberty, is not against the rule of charity.

Theoph. What is an offense?

Mat. The word properly signifieth something laide in
 Of offences. the way, vpon the which he that walketh may stumble & fall. In this place by translation, or a borrowed kinde of sense, it is taken for that, by the which we are hindred from receiuing the doctrine of the trueth, or else be turned frō it, after we haue receiued it. In which sense he is said to offend one which either saith or doth any thing, whereby the saluation of his neighbour is hindred. Now that is a most grieuous sinne. For Christ saith; Whoso euer shall offend one of the little ones that beleue in me, it were better for him that a milstone were hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the bottome of the sea.

Mat. 18. 6.

Theoph. May there not be some certaine rule set downe, whereby it may be vndoubtedly knowne, in what thinges and how we are to beware, that we giue not offence to our neighbour?

Mat. There is. But that we may rightly vnderstand it, we must know, that there be two kindes of offences. There is one called an offence taken, which falleth vpon the head of him that taketh it, forasmuch as no occasion was giuen. As for example, if any take offence because his neighbour doth somewhat that is commanded of God, or refuseth to doe some euill thing, forbidden of God. For euen as our liberty must be subiect vnto charity, so charity and the righteouesnesse of the Law, required in the second Table, ought to be subiect to the iunty of faith. Therefore thou must not offend God, to auoid the offence of thy neighbour.

The other kinde of offence, is called offence giuen, the fault

fault & condemnation wherof, lighteth vpon him by who it is giuen. As when one giueth offese to his neighbour, by doing something forbidden of God; or else offendeth the vnlearned and weak, by an vncharitable & indiscreet vsing of indifferent things.

Theo. What vnderstandest thou by indifferent things?

Mat. Those, which of themselves be neither good nor euil: such, as it is known these be; to eate flesh or fish. Now, I said, that we must not offend the weake, through the vse of the. For the Apostle saith; Destroy thou not him with thy meate, for whom Christ died.

Rom. 14. 15.

1. Cor. 8. 13.

And againe, in another place; If meate offend my brother, I will eate no flesh, while the world standeth; that I may not offend my brother.

The. But, why dost thou mention the weake only, when thou speakest of an offense giuen in indifferent things?

Mat. Because we must abstaine from them, only for the weakes sake, vntill they haue beene taught and confirmed in the knowledge of Christian liberty; but not for the malicious men, and mockers of Christian liberty: among who also sometime it is profitable, that we claime & take our liberty; that it may be knowne, what doctrine or Religion we professe.

Theoph. The third part of this commandement is behind: I would haue thee open that in few words.

Theoph. It beginneth at these words; I am the Lord, thy God, strong, iealous, &c. He calleth himselfe our God, both to oppose himselfe to idols, as especially to shew, that it is he alone, to whom we ought to cleaue; seeing that he is our God, that is, mercitull and good. He calleth himselfe strong and iealous, to teach vs, that he both can and will reuenge so great an iniury, and indeede with so grievous vengeance, that it shall stretch it selfe to their children, euen to the third and fourth generation of such as follow the vngodlinesse of their fathers: Euen as also hee sheweth his perpetuall mercy and goodnesse, to many generations, vnto them which loue him & keepe his law.

Theoph. There be three things in this thy exposition, of which I thinke it fit to aske thee.

H

First,

First, in what sense God is said to be iealous: forasmuch as the affection of iealousie doth not any way agree to his Maiesty.

Why God
is called
iealous.

Hos. 2. 20.

Ierem. 3.
Hos. 2.

Mat. The Lord giueth himselfe this title, hauing respect to the couenant made with vs. Now this hee often compareth vnto mariage; as well for the vniõ which we haue with him, as for the mutuall fidelity which wee also haue promised vnto him. Hereof it commeth, that by the Prophet he saith; I will marrie thee to my selfe, in faithfulness: as if he did say, that as he performed to vs all the duties of a faithful and true husband, euen so he required againe by couenant, of vs, loue and chastity, belonging to mariage. And for this cause he cõplaineth, & not seldome, by his Prophets; that Iſraell committed fornication with Idoles, and was polluted or defiled with adultery. When therefore he calleth himselfe iealous, he doth it, that with one word he may cut off all the vaine excuses, wherewith Idolaters seeke to hide themselves. For this he meaneth; that he cannot by any means beare it, that, vnder any colour, we should giue the loue & reuerence, due to him, vnto Idols: as an husband, that religiously and holily loueth his wife, cannot endure it, whatsoeuer she pretendeth, that his wife should bestow the signes of her friendshippe and loue vpon another. Morcouer, by this title he warneth vs, that at the last he will execute no lesse punishment vpon Idolaters, then a iealous husband vpon his wife often taken, by him, in adultery.

Theoph. The other thing commeth to my remembrance, whereof I said I would aske; how it agreeth with the iustice of God, to require the punishment of the fathers offense, of his posterity.

Eze. 18. 10.

Mat. The Lord meaneth not, that the children should be punished for the sinnes of the parents: forasmuch as he saith by the Prophet; That he will not, that the sonne should beare the iniquity of the father, or the father beare the iniquity of the sonne. But this visitation is fulfilled, when the Lord taketh from the house of the vngodly his grace, the light of his truth, and the other helps of saluation. Now then, nothing else can be looked for, but that the

the children, being forsaken of God, should liue most wickedly, and moue God to take vengeance vpon them. Fro hence is that preposterous and disordered desire of the children, to follow the idolatrous way of their parentes: whereupon it comueth, that they excuse their idolatry by this one pretence, namely, the example of their fathers. But if the Lord do threaten so great punishment to Idolaters, so much blinded, that they thinke God is rightly worshipped of them: how much more fearefull iudgement ought they to looke for, that bee illuminated with the light of his trueth? and notwithstanding defile themselves with idolatry and superstitions, against their consciences.

Against the
Nicodemites.

Theoph. Those men are wont to answere (which also my selfe haue heard, from the, more then once) that they acknowledge no sin in that, seeing they liue vp their mindes vnto God, in the midst of those vngodly superstitions: which also they hate, with all their hearts.

Mat. It is a most vaine excuse, which the diuell hath put into their heads to lull their consciences asleepe, & so to hold them in his nets.

Theoph. But how can they be conuincd of idolatry? seeing that the outward actions of men should be iudged of, by the inward action of the heart.

Mat. That indeede is true, in such things as of themselves bee good or indifferent, and be made ill by an ill intencas, if one prayed to God, to be praised & wel thought of. But concerning actions of their owne nature euill, & expressly forbidden of God, as is outward idolatry, there is no inward affection of the minde which can make them good, and acquite them from sinne.

Theoph. In what place is outward idolatry forbidden?

Mat. In the second commandement, where, by name the Lord forbiddeth, that no man bow himselfe to idols, or worship them. Which thing is often repeated in sundry places of the Scripture.

Moreouer, it may be gathered of that, which the Lord answered *Elias*, when he noted, and (as it were by outward signes) marked the Israelites, which had not fallen away

Rom. II. 4.

from his religion. For hee saith; I haue referued to my selfe seauen thousand me, which haue not bowed the knee to the image *Baal*. In which words, he declareth, that all such as worshipped *Baal* with the outward gesture, were idolaters, although they might pretend the inward affection of their minde to be otherwise. Is it not also iust and right, that God should be worshipped of vs in our bodies, as well as in our mindes, for as much as he is the maker of both?

2. Kin. 5. 18

Theoph. Againe, they doe alledge for themselves, the example of *Naaman* the Syrian: who, being lightened with the knowledge of the true God through that miraculous cure, said vnto the Prophet; Herein the Lord be merciful to thy seruant, when my Lord shal goe into the house of *Rimmon* to worship there, and shal leane vpon my hand, & I bow my selfe in the house of *Rimmon*: In this bowing my selfe in the house of *Rimmon*, I beseech the Lord to forgiue his seruant, in this thing. To whome the Prophet answered; Goe in peace. Of which words they gather, that the Prophet gaue his consent, hee should do that thing.

Mat. This example maketh more against them, then for them. For that *Naaman* the Syrian, the chiefe Captain of the hoast of the king of *Aram*, and most deare to the King himselfe, when he was first conuerted to the religion of the true God, knew that he sinned, if he did but onely apply himselfe (in his seruice and bowing) to the King while he worshipped: and he prayeth God to forgiue him that sinne. But these our Nicodemites, which haue so many yeares bene taught the knowledge of God and of his spirituall worship, and indeede farre more clearly then the Fathers vnder the Law euer were, cannot be brought thus farre, to confesse that they sinne, when euery where of their owne voluntary accord and without any inforcement of the kings authority, that vseth their seruice, they be partakers of Idolatry and superstitions. Verily, the confession of *Naaman* the Syrian shall bee sufficient to condemne them in the day of iudgement: so farre off therefore is it, that by it they can by any meanes defende themselves,

themselves: Concerning the answer of the Prophet, *Go in peace*, hee doth not by it allowe the sinne of *Naaman*: neither was it his minde to flatter *Naaman*: But, when he sawe him, in so little space of time, to haue profited so well in the knowledge and feare of God, as that freely he confessed and condemned his owne infirmitie; he encouraged him, and putteth him in hope, that God would strengthen him, and bring that to perfection, which hee had begun in him.

For this cause he saith, *Go in peace*. But if he had had to doe with the Nicodemites of our age, hee would haue vsed a farre other manner of speech, and haue cried out aloud the same thing, which *Elias* (that went before him) did to the Iewes of his time, mingling the worshippe of Idoles with the seruice of God; How long doe ye halt betweene two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if *Baal* be he, go after him. 1. Reg. 18.

Theoph. I am not a little gladde, that I haue gotten the meaning of that place. For sometimes I haue bene troubled about the loosing or vntying of that knot. I doe not therefore now thinke, that the Nicodemites haue any excuse, whereby to cleare themselves from the crime of idolatry: seeing it is euident, that this excuse of theirs is nothing worth.

Mat. Adde hereunto, that there be against them the examples of *Daniel* and his fellowes, and of innumerable Martyrs; who rather chose to suffer most cruell death, then neuer so little to make shew that they worshipped idols. Forasmuch therefore as they dare not impute fool hardinesse to these faithful seruants of god (of who the Scripture it self reporteth honourably) it followeth of necessity, that they must condemne themselves; because they feare men more then God: of which fault, there is no doubt but their owne conscience accuseth them. Let them therefore thinke vpon that sentence pronounced by God against the fearefull, (that is, such as, knowing the truth, doe for feare dissemble it; whome hee ioyneth with vnbelieuers, abominable, murtherers, whooremongers, forcers, and lyers) to whom he saith; Their part is appointed 1. 3. Apoc. 21. 8.

Apoꝑ. 21. 8. in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. Let them, I say, remember that sentence; that (if they haue any care of their saluation) they may preuent the wrath and iudgement of God, by true repentance.

Theoph. Let vs now returne to the wordes of the commaundement. Why did he rather say, *to them that hate me*, then, *to them which do not obey me*?

Mat. That he might make the vngodlinesse of such as obey him not, especially of those which break this commaundement, the more manifest. For, by that their disobedience, they declare the inward hatred, which they beare towards him. But contrariwise, the godly, by keeping of his commandments, do witnesse their loue and reuerence of him. Whereby it is apparant, how much idolaters and superstitious persons be deceiued, whe they think to declare their loue toward God, by their phantasticall & brainsick Religions; seeing God himselfe testifieth, that such deuises be signes of the greatest hatred against him. And, indeed, by these things is ouerthrowen that most false and hurtfull principle of Idolaters, wherein they affirme, that all things which be done with a good intent (that is, with a mind to serue God) are well done.

Of good
intents.

Theoph. But yet, it seemeth impossible, that good intents should be ill.

Mat. True; if thou meane such intents, as may truelie be called good.

Theoph. Which are they?

Mat. Such as are grounded vpon the expresse word of God. For, the other which bee against the word of God, howsoeuer men esteem them to be good, yet are they most abhominable and displeasing to God. Therefore, the good intents, as they call them, of Idolaters, and superstitious persons, are no better then the intents of the Iewes, which put Christ to death; or of those, which haue flaine almost innumerable faithfull seruants of Christ, of whom euen Christ himselfe witnesseth, that they thought they did God seruice.

Iohn. 16. 2.

Theoph. Let vs go forward. Why doth God, speaking of
punish-

punishment, mention onely three or foure generations;
and, speaking of reward, nameth thousands?

Mat. To teach vs, that he is more inclining to gentleness, and doing of good, then to seueritie. Notwithstanding, the sentence pronounced of God is not so generall, but that still he reserueth it in his own liberty to shew himselfe mercifull when hee pleaseth, to the children of the wicked, and to refuse and cast off such of the seede of the faithfull, whom it shall seem good vnto him. Neuerthelesse, he so tempereth it, that his promise and threatening may appear to be neither vaine nor deceitfull.

Theoph. But these things seeme to agree rather to the whole Law, then to this commandment alone.

Mat. Right. For the Apostle witnesseth, that the first *Ephes. 6.2.* commandment is the first with promise; namely, speciall.

Theoph. Wherefore then are they put into this commandment?

Mat. Because the breach of the whole Law followeth vpon the breaking of this. For, when any man goeth about to set vp another then the true God, he hath already broken the whole Law. For, whatsoever can be performed or done by him, cannot be esteemed obedience to God; but to the Idol which he hath made.

Adde this also, that idolaters are so busied in their superstitions, ioyned most neere with idolatry, and doe so swell with a vaine opinion of merite, that they easilie despise and set light by the lawfull keeping of Gods commandments: which, dayly experience doth plentifully witness.

The third commandment.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. For, the Lord wil not hold him guiltlesse, that taketh his name in vaine.

Theoph. We haue bene long in the exposition of the second commandment: because the matter it self required it. Now we are to come to the third. And first, let vs see, how many parts there be of it.

Mat. Three, as of the former.

1 In the first, is forbidden the rash vse of Gods name.
2 In the second, is commanded the sanctifying of it : & this is contained vnder a prohibition.

3 The third is a threatening pronounced against the breakers of this commandement.

Theoph. That the exposition of this commaundement may be the easier, I will demand three things.

1 First, in what sense the name of God is taken, in this place.

2 Secondly, what it is to take the name of God in vaine.

3 Thirdly, how many wayes it may be taken in vaine.

Theoph. Declare, what the name of God signifieth.

The first
part of the
third com-
mand. is of
Gods name.
Deut. 28.
38.

Mat. It is first taken for God himselfe: as it is easie to gather out of the words of *Moses* : If thou shalt not take heed to do all the words of this law, which are written in this booke, to feare that glorious and terrible name, *the Lord thy God*, the Lord will make thy plagues wonderfull. Secondly, it signifieth all those things, which concerne his glory: as, his word and workes.

Theoph. But now what is it to take the name of God in vaine?

How the
name of
God is ta-
ken in vaine

Mat. To speake of God, or his words, or workes, contemptuously, lightly, and rashly: this is, to prophane and vnhallo w his Maiesty. For this cause he said rather, *the name of the Lord thy God*, then *my name*. For, this hee meant; that, seeing the Lord is our god, we ought to think so reuerently of his Maiesty, that of vs it should be had in most reuerend & inuolable estimation.

Theoph. Now we are to see, how many wayes the name of God is taken in vaine: which is the third point of the first part of this commandement.

How many
wayes it is
taken in
vaine.

Mat. It may indeede bee taken in vaine, sundry wayes: which notwithstanding I will reduce vnto three.

1 The first, which is also the most grieuous, is blasphemy, that is railing: namely, when a man doth not onely speake contemptuously of God, but doth also vse reprochfull words, and such as sauour of cōtempt against his Maiesty: as they do, that renounce God. To whom also, we do
ioyne

ioyne all those, that trample vnder their feet the most holy mystery of our saluation wrought by Christ, and do vsually iweare by his death, bloud, body, and other parts thereof, as his head and belly; and that, for the most part, of set purpose, & for the nonce; not being stirred or occasioned thereto, by anger: albeit, indeed, there be no anger, that before God can excuse so horrible blasphemy.

Theoph. Such men verily be farre off from giuing those thanks which we owe vnto him, in that he vouchsafed to take vpon him our humane nature; & that, in it (to deliuer vs from euerlasting death) he would be abased to the most shamefull death of the crosse.

Mat. Thou sayest true. And therein they shew themselves worse then the very Iewes, of whom he was crucified. For, if they had knowen him, they would not haue crucified the Lord of glory, saith *Paule*. Therefore, except they repent, it must needs come to passe, that (to their eternall misery) they shall seele his most iust wrath and iudgement; seeing that, of set purpose, they doe so profane the benefit of our redemption wrought by him.

1. Cor. 2. 8.

Theoph. Let vs search out another way, whereby the name of God is taken in vaine.

Mat. When we abuse the holy Scripture: which is done, chiefly three wayes.

The prophaning of Gods word.

1 First, when it is profaned by ridiculous scoffes and mocks, as the manner of drunkards and prophane men is.

2 Secondly, when it is corrupted; that is, wrested otherwise then the true sense is: as, hereticks doe.

3 Thirdly, when any abuseth it to inchantments or sorceries, for the healing of men or beasts, and such like.

Theoph. But they which by that meanes heale diseases (especially those of men) do say, there is no sin in it: seeing they vse good words, whereof there followeth a very good effect; namely, good health for the most part restored to the sicke.

Mat. The diuell vseth to assaile men, disguised: that is to say, he changeth himselfe into an Angell of light; to the end, he may be the better welcom. For he knoweth, that if he were decried, all would abhorre him. Therefore he can finde

2. Co. 11. 14.

finde no better colour, then if he make shew of the word of God: which, neuerthelesse, is both corrupted by him, & wrested from the true meaning; as hee doth with heretickes: or else it is turned from the right and lawfull vse (namely, doctrine, reproofe, correction, and instruction) to the healing of bodies, and such other delusions; whereby both it is profaned, and the name of God taken in vaine. Whereupon it is plaine, that the cures, which sometimes ensue vpon those deceipts and iuglings, be not of God (against whom there is, that way, great sin committed); but from the Diuell.

Theoph. Canst thou prooue, that those kinds of healings or cures, be of the Diuell?

Mat. Yea indeede, and that most easily. For God vseth onely two waies to the curing of diseases: whereof one is naturall & ordinarie; namely, by the help of medicines, whereinto he hath put that vertue and force: the other is besides the course of nature, by miracle; which is, when god himselfe doth it, by his own power. But, that way of healing, by rehearsing words out of the holy Scriptures, cannot be called ordinary or naturall; forasmuch as the word of God is not giuen to heale bodies, but soules. Neither can it be reckoned among the miracles, which proceede from the power of God. For, the power of God is not tyed to the vttering of certaine words, be they neuer so good or excellent: otherwise there were no man, that might not do miracles at his pleasure: which, in very deed, is most absurd. For thereupon it should follow, that God declareth his power, not according to his owne will, but according to our pleasure. Therefore no man ought to doubt, but that these kinds of healings be of the Diuell, and not of God.

Theoph. They obiekt, that it is not likely, that the Diuell (the enemy of mankind) should regard and care for the good health of men.

Mat. That which treachers and poysoners are wont to do (namely, to flatter thee for a time, to the end they may afterward lay hands vpon thee the more easily) the same vseth the Diuell. For, if he heale the disease of cattell, hee doth

doth it with no other minde, but to binde the owners of them to himselfe. If he bring any ease to our bodies, hee doth it to bring the soule in bondage to himself, and (consequently) that, at length he may throwe down body and soule into hell, where he is. Finally, he doth alwaies vsurp dominion and Lordship ouer them, to whome he maketh shew of seruice for a time.

Theoph. It were therefore better for a man to serue himselfe, then to haue such a seruant.

Mat. It were so; and, indeed, to be holden with sicknesse all the time of our life, rather then to recouer our health by his helpe.

Theoph. I will yet demand one thing. Whence hath the Diuell this power, that hee can heale the diseases of our bodie?

Mat. God permitteth it vnto him by his iust iudgemēt, as it hath beene already said; that they might more and more be blinded, which flie to the diuell: that so, by their own desert, they may perish in their errors.

Theoph. The third maner of taking Gods name in vaine is behind.

Mat. It is, when a man professeth himselfe to knowe God; but denieth him in his deeds: that is, whose whole life yeeldeth nothing but offenses and stumbling blockes. Of such the Prophet maketh mention: for thus the Lord chideth with them; Why dost thou declare my statutes, and takest my law in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my wordes behind thee. The same also is to be thought of hypocrites; which are farre worse then these. For, in words, & outward deeds, they do vainely make shew of the feare of God: but their hart is very farre off from him. In this number also they may be reputed, whose mind wandreth about other matters, while they are praying.

Gods name
takē in vain
by dissolute-
nesse of life.

Psal. 50. 16

Theoph. Let vs come to the fourth maner of taking Gods name in vaine.

When we
speake of
God with-
out consi-
deration,

Mat. When this word *God*, or the name of *Iesus*, is vsed of vs either rashlie or without cause, as many doe: with whom it is ordinarie, that, in the way of maruelling

or

or wondering, they often vse these speeches, *my God! Is this!*

Theoph. But thou shalt hardly perswade these, that they take the name of God in vaine; although it be often vled of them. For they say; It is better to name God then the Diuell.

Mat. Our nature is so corrupt, and so vled to sin, that we see not any but the greatest: which, indeede, if they bee weighed by our iudgement, shall bee taken for very small. For this cause, God gaue vnto vs his Law: which is as it were a glasse, and a most perfect patterne of holinesse; that, by comparing our actions with it, we might acknowledge our sinnes, and studie to amend. But, of these things shall be spoken more at large, when we come to the vse of the Law.

Now we are to examine that fourth manner of breaking this law, by comparing it with the commandement it self; *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine.*

What is this, *in vaine*? do we then only sin against Gods name, when we assaile & set vpon it with blasphemies and renouncing of it? No, at no hand: but euen then also, when it is named either contemptuously or rashly. But who is he, that (becing in his right mind) seeth not, that it is both cōtemptuously & rashly vled in these formes of speech? If one haue bin at a feast (which peradventure hath not bene without riot and other sins) he wil not feare to vtter these words, according to the custome among vs;

O my God, how excessiuely haue we laughed!

O my God, how richly and daintily were we entertained!

If any of our seruants disquiet vs, by their vnskilfulnesse or slownesse, straight way he shall heare,

O God, how foolish thou art!

O God, how slowe thou art!

If we finde any place filthy and vncleane, or if we smell any ill sauour, by & by shall the name of God be mingled with these things, in these words;

O God, what a filthy place!

O God, what an ill sauour do I smell!

These examples, most common among our countrey-men, wer to be remebred; that we might so much the more plainly

plainely shew, how common a thing it is with vs, to vse the name of God contēptuously, & vnaduisedly. A certain Ancient left it written, that if we haue a costly garment, we do then only put it on, when we go to the cōpany of great personages; & do most carefully looke vnto it that it be not spotted: Inſomuch that we shun & auoid al ſuch things as might ſoyle it. But. the most holy name of God (with the excellency & worthineſſe wherof no garment, no nor any creature is indeede to be compared) is ſo little eſteemed of vs, that it is continually mixed with vain and idle ſpeeches, railings, and filthineſſe.

Theoph. I do acknowledge, that the name of God is abuſed with very great cōtempt, in the ſpeeches which thou haſt reckened vp: but, that ſin is ſo common, that in verie deepe the godly themſelues, and ſuch as deſire to reforme their liues, be not free from it. For, a man ſhall finde verie few that ſin not in this point.

Mat. The cauſe why I haue handled that ſin the more largely, was, that it may the better be knowne: eſpecially to ſuch as be touched with any feare of God; that by the reuerence, wherewith they honor his name, they may be moued to amendment: Which they ſhall with very ſmal labor attaine, if they giue their minds vnto it.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fiſt and laſt way, wherby the name of God is taken in vaine.

Mat. That is, when a man ſweareth vainely.

Theoph. Before I demāde how any ſweareth by the name of god vainly, I wold haue thee to declare what an oath is.

Mat. It is the calling of God to witneſſe, for the confirmation of the vnknowne truth of our ſpeech.

Theoph. How many kinds of oaths be there?

Mat. Two. For, the one is of things paſt, the other of things to come; namely when any thing is promiſed with an oath: which promiſe, if it be made vnto God, is called a vow.

Theo. Let vs conſider how a man ſweareth by the name of God, in vaine.

Mat. That is, as often as thoſe circumſtances, which are required in an oath, are not kept.

Of a vaine
oath.
Of an oath.

Theo.

Theoph. How many are those circumstances?

Mat. In an oath concerning things past, there are but three; without which, the oath shall be altogether vaine.

1. The first is, that the thing, which we are ready to sweare, be not only true; but also that the truth of it bee certainly knowne to vs.

2. Secondly, that it be of some importance either in respect of Gods glory, or the good of our neighbour.

3. The third is; that the truth of that thing, by no other meanes can be brought to light: for, otherwise, the name of God is contemptuously vsed.

But, as an oath respecteth things to come, there be five things to be obserued.

1. First, that the thing be of some importance.

2. That it be iust and lawfull.

3. That it be in our power.

4. That we be ready to performe it.

Psal. 15. 4. 5. Finally, that when time is we performe it indeede; although it should be to our losse: as we be taught of the Prophet.

Theoph. What, if all these circumstances bee not obserued, is not the name of God taken in vaine?

Mat. It is: and herein he is greatly reproached, especially, if that whereof we sweare be not true. For then hee, that so sweareth, doth put a lye and an vntruth vpon god; and consequently, so much as in him lyeth, doth take from him his Godhead, and maketh him like the Diuell, who is the father of lies.

Iob. 8. 44.

Theoph. But if we haue taken our oath to doe some ill thing (as, for example, to kil) are we bound to perform that?

Mat. At no hand For, in our Baptisme, we vowed vnto God, that we would serue him, and obey his will. And that oath cutteth off all other contrary to it.

Sinne therefore is committed, in that an vnlawful oath was taken vainely and rashly, and contrary to the will of God: howbeit, it were far more hainous to keep this oath. But it wee be not bound to do ill things, albeit we haue expressly promised them; much lesse if they be required of vs, vnder the colour of some generall promise. For, secretly

secretly they be excepted which are not lawfull; no lesse the those which be impossible, or cannot be done. And therefore Herod was not bound to cut off the head of *Iohn Baptist*, by his oath taken to *Herodias*. *Mat. 14. 7.*

Theoph. We haue spoken sufficiently of the first part of this commandement; let vs come to the other. Now, that pertaineth to the sanctifying of Gods name. By what means therefore may the name of God be sanctified or hallowed of vs? *The second part of the third commandement of sanctifying Gods name.*

Mat. By five; euen the same number with those, wherby it is taken in vaine.

Theoph. Declare seuerally euery of these.

Mat. The first is, that we sing his praises, read his word, and speake reuerently of him.

2. The other is, that in aduersity he be praised of vs, both in hart & mouth; as we read *Iob* did, in these words; *Iob. 1. 21.*
Let the name of God be blessed.

3. The third is, that so often as need shall require, we do make a most franke confession of his truth; and leade a life agreeable to that confession.

4. The fourth is, that we pray vnto him, and from our heart giue him thanks.

5. The fift, that, when it shall be necessary, we sweare by his name.

Theoph. How is the name of God sanctified, when we sweare by it?

Mat. Because, by an oath lawfully taken, he is acknowledged of vs for the true God: forasmuch as wee confesse him to be the searcher of the heart and secret thoughts, when we cal him to be a witnesse of the things that be hidden from men.

Secondly, because we fly to him as a most earnest defender of truth; and therefore a most seuerer reuenger of lyers, and such as forswear themselves. And these indeed be the proper offices of God alone.

Finally, by an oath his name is sanctified: seeing that, by it, controuersies, which hurt Christian charitie, be ended, as the Apostle speaketh. *Heb. 6. 16.*

From whence wee may gather, how wonderfull the kinde.

Against A-
p- baptists,
that wholly
condemne
swearing.

kindenes of God is toward vs: who doth so far abase him-
selfe, that he will be present at our controuersies, & make
an end of them. Therefore there is no cause why we should
doubt to sweare by his name, in the place of iudgement,
or else where; so as all the conditions be kept. For who-
soeuer refuseth to sweare, refuseth to giue glorie vnto
God.

Mat. 5. 34. *Theoph.* But Christ commandeth that we sweare not at
all, neither by the heauen, nor by the earth; and that our
communication be yea, yea, nay, nay: affirming further; that
whatsoeuer is more, is of euill, which also is confirmed by

James. 5. 12 Saint *James.*

Mat. That indeed is true. But Christ, in the same Chap-
ter, plainly saith; that he came not to destroy the lawe
or the Prophets, but to fulfill them. Therefore his purpose is
not to condemne the right vse of an oath, expressly com-
manded of God in these words of *Moses*; Thou shalt feare
the Lord thy God, and shalt serue him onely, and sweare
by his name.

Deut. 6. 13. *Theoph.* With what minde therefore, did Christ vtterly
forbid swearing?

Mat. With a purpose to restore, to this commandement,
the true vnderstanding of it; which had bene much cor-
rupted by the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees. For
they taught, it was no sin, when any sware in vaine by the
creatures (as, by heauen and earth); seeing that the name
of God was not expressed. But Christ meaneth to shew,
that although the name of God was suppressed, or not
mentioned, yet secretly it was sufficiently exprest in such
othes; & that therefore therein sin was committed against
this commandement. Therefore his purpose is not to for-
bid the lawfull vse of an oath; but, the abuse; as when a man
sweareth vainely, by what name, or in what manner soe-
uer it be done.

Theoph. It followeth therefore, that it is lawfull to
sweare by creatures; so as it be not vainely: forasmuch as
the name of God is secretly vnderstood in them.

Mat. Yeauenly: yet with this condition, that those
creatures be auoided in swearing, which haue bene com-
monly

monly

monly abused to idolatry. For then the name of God is not vnderstood vnder them, but it is euen suppressed, that they may haue his roome, the honour being giuen vnto them, which belongeth to the maiesty of God alone. But this do they, which swear by the names of Saints departed. In which respect the Lord is bitterly angry with them that swear by other Gods, and taketh that kinde of swearing to be an argument of manifest falling away from him. Whereupon he complaineth of the Israelites in *Jeremy*, in these words: Thy children haue forsaken me, and sworne by those which are not Gods. And that indeed very iustly: for the breaking of the second and third commandement, is a signe of breaking the first.

Thus this learned man and some others haue thought of this matter.

Jerem. 5. 22

Theoph. How so?

Mat. Euen as he worshippeth God with spirituall worship, and sweareth by his name so oft as the Lord shall require, which spiritually hath conceiued and comprehended him in his minde: so whosoever hath imagined to himselfe a false God, or many Gods, doth forthwith shew it by worshipping of Idols, whose names hee hath in his mouth, when he sweareth. It is therefore truely saide, that idols be first in the heart, before they be brought forth either with the hand or mouth.

Theoph. Let vs come to the third part of the commandement, which is the threatning against such as breake it.

Mat. It is contained in these words; The Lord will not hold him guiltlesse which taketh his name in vaine. Whereby it appeareth, that the transgression of this commandement is accounted a most hainous sinne before God, notwithstanding men make light of it, and that therefore hee will with grieuous punishments, be auenged vpon such as be guilty of it.

The third part of the third commandement

Theoph. Is there any thing that doth so much aggrauate this sinne?

Mat. Yea verily. For there is no commandement in the breaking whereof there is scene such insolent contempt of God.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat.

Mat. Because we are ledde to breake the other commandements, either vpon a false opinion of worshipping God as when we giue our selues to idolatry and superstition; or for our owne estimation, when we yeeld our selues to reuenge; or for our pleasure, when wee commit fornication; or for our profit, when wee steale: or for some feare, as when wee tell a lye: but for the breaking of this commandement, wee can pretend neither the worshipping of God, nor our profit, nor our pleasure neither any feare. Therefore the transgression of this commandement, and especially blasphemie, hath no other beginning, but a most manifest contempt of Gods maiesty.

Theo. Some are wont to excuse the matter by custome, to cleare themselves of the sin of the contempt of God.

Mat. But I would demand, whence that custome sprong: Did it not come from the very impiety and mad contépt of God, wherewith our minds were wholly taken vp and possessed before? For it is certaine, whé at the first the mind of man is lightened with the least sun. beame of the feare of God, that that bad custome is presently changed, howsoeuer it might goe about to defend it selfe by prescription of very long time.

The fourth Commandement.

Remember the Sabboath day, to keepe it holy; sixe daies shalt thou labour, and do all thy worke, but the seauenth day shall be the Sabboath to the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt do no manner of worke, thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, thy man-seruant, nor thy maid-seruant, nor thy cattell, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: for in six daies the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seauenth day, wherfore the Lord blessed the Sabboath day and halloved it.

Tocoph. The fourth commandement of this first Table is behind: to the exposition whereof, that we may make an easier way, let vs see of how many parts it standeth.

Mat. Of foure.

1. The first containeth the summe of the whole commandement, in these words; Remember the Sabbath day, to keepe it holy.

2. The second sheweth, which that Sabbath day is, when he saith: Six daies shalt thou labour and do all thy worke; but vpon the seauenth day, shall be the Sabbath to the Lord thy God.

3. The third teacheth, how that day is to be kept holy. Thou shalt do no worke; neither thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattell, nor the stranger that is within thy gates.

4. The fourth rendereth a reason, why he appointed the seauenth day, rather than any other day, vnto this rest, For in sixe daies God made the heauen and the earth, the sea, & all that in them is, & rested the seauenth day, therefore he blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Theo. We must follow these foure parts in order, Declare therefore the meaning of the first.

Mat. When the Lord saith; Remember the Sabbath day, he teacheth vs, that this commandement is of vetie great waight. Which appeareth to be most true, euen by this, that the keeping of the rest of the commandements, dependeth vpon the keeping of this. In respect whereof; the Lord euery where by his Prophets, obiecteth to the Israelites the transgression of this commandement; when hee meaneth to signifie the breach of the whole Law. He addeth after: that thou sanctifie or hallow it: that is, cease and abstaine from bodily works, that thou maiest apply thy selfe earnestly to spirituall and heauenly.

Theoph. Which callest thou heauenly and spirituall workes?

Mat. That we may vnderstand that point, we must know that the Sabbath was commanded of God for two causes, the first whereof was ceremoniall. That ceremonie also is considered in two respects. For by that bodily rest, the Lord meant to warne the people of Israel, to abstaine and rest from their owne workes being carnall and defiled, that they might suffer the holy Ghost to worke

Why the Lord, vnder the Law, commanded the Sabbath.

in them. This doth he himselfe witnesse in these wordes; See that you keepe my Sabboath, because it is a signe betweene me and you in your generations, that you may knowe, that it is I the Lord which sanctifie you. Out of which words it is plaine, that that ceremony was a type or shadow of our regeneration.

Secondly, that ceremony serued, to signifie the euerlasting rest of the kingdome of heauen, which was as it were a part of the former. For that cause the Lord calleth the land of Canaan, rest, because it was a signe or token of eternal life, according to the interpretation of the Apostle to the Hebrewes.

The other end of the bodily rest, is this, that wee may waite vpon the ministerie of the Church: for that is established by God in this commādemēt. Moreouer, that we may meditate vpon his workes, and diligently apply our felues to the loue of our neighbour, and the instruction of our household & family. These are the two ends of this bodily rest: the first whereof together with the rest of the ceremonies, is taken away by the comming of Christ, who is the truth of it. But the other is perpetuall and to continue for euer. Therefore that rest belongeth vnto vs, and is euery weeke to be kept one day.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part.

Mat. After that the Lord had commanded one day for rest, then he sheweth which day he wil haue kept, and that is the seauenth, namely the last of the weeke. He doth also teach, how we should spend the rest of the weeke, namely in working, that is, in doing our worldly businesses, to the end we may be the fitter for the rest of the seauenth day, and may the better performe such things as hee himselfe hath commanded.

Theoph. Which was the seauenth day?

Mat. That which we do yet call Saterday. For the Lords day, properly, is the first day of the weeke, according to the distinction made by God himselfe. But that seauenth day the Apostles changed, to teach that the ceremony was abrogated, and the *Rest* they put off to the Lords day, vpon the which Christ by his resurrection had put an
end

end to that ceremonie.

Theoph. How did Christ by his resurrection, put an end vnto that ceremonie?

Mat. Because, by the vertue and power thereof, we are spiritually rayfed vp, that we may serue God, and mortifie our concupiscences all the daies of our life: so as, for this purpose, we do not now stand in need of the obseruations of any day.

Theoph. Is not this to obserue daies, which thou condemnedst as a superstitious thing, in the exposition of the former commandements?

Mat. To obserue daies and times, is nothing else but to thinke one day or time holier then another, which agreeth not to the hallowing of the lords day. For we do not attribute vnto it greater holinesse then to another. But when the Apostles would take away the ceremonie of the seauenth day, they appointed this, which came first in place, to that vse. And as another day had bene as fit, so neither is this lesse fit or conuenient, then any other.

Theoph. Declare the third part of the commandement.

Mat. It teacheth that no worke concerning this life is to be done, vnlesse it be necessary, vpon that day. But it is to be marked, that such works were then iudged to be faultie and sinfull among the Iewes, because they were contrarie to the ceremony which they were bound to keepe. But now, that ceremonie being taken away, they are not forbidden as euill in themselues, but because they hinder vs and withdraw vs from holy exercises and meditations.

Theoph. But why is there mention made of the *Rest* of men-seruants, and of maid-seruants, of cattel, and of strangers?

Mat. Concerning men-seruants, and maid-seruants, God commandeth this, as well that they might haue some ease from labour, as also that they might attend vpon the ministerie of the Church, and so to care for and looke to their owne saluation, no lesse then their maisters. The *Rest* of beasts God doth therefore mention, because they work not but with the seruice and helpe of seruants. He speaketh also of strangers, because if they be of the same profession

with vs, they also are bound to keepe the lawe of God: if not, yet at least, heede must be taken that they bee not an euill example to the rest.

Theoph. The fourth part is remaining.

Mat. The Lord setteth before vs his owne example, the more earnestly to pricke vs forward to the keeping of that *Rest*. He doth also call to our remembrance the creation of the world, that we might remember of whom we haue our beginning, and the innumerable benefites that we enioy. The Sabboath day therefore should be vnto vs as it were an image of the creation of the world: and vpon that day, ought we to meditate and thinke vpon that creation, least wee be guiltie of that fault, which God in former times by *Moses* vpbraided the Iewes with; Thou hast forgotten that strong God which hath begotten thee, the God which made thee thou hast not remembered.

Here vpon it is, that by name he reckoneth vp euerie of his works by it selfe, For in sixe daies the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. But here is mention of the Lords resting, not because he hath cast off the care of his works; for he continually worketh to preserve his creatures, and to guide them by his prouidence. But this he would teach vs, that he hath ceased from making of the kinds of things. Finally, the blessing and hallowing of the Sabboath day is after added, not because that day is in it selfe holier then others; but for that it is of God appointed for this purpose, that wee should rest from our owne workes, and diligently giue our selues to holy workes.

Theoph. The Sabboath day therefore is sanctified of god, in that he did appoint it to holy and religious workes: It is also sanctified of vs, when we giue our selues carefully to performe those workes.

Mat. It is true.

Theoph. But are not the rest of the daies so hallowed of God, namely that they be appointed to holy and religious workes?

Mat. Yes verily, so farre forth indeede as may be for our

our businesſes. But vpon the Sabbath, al other things are to be ſet aſide, that we may diligently apply our ſelues to thoſe works. And verily men be without excuſe, except they do this. For whereas the Lord hath deuided the week into ſeauen daies, he appointed one onely for himſelfe, but the other ſixe he hath left vnto vs, to looke to our owne matters,

The ſecond Table of the Law.

Theoph. The foure commaundements of the firſt Table beeing expounded, order requireth that we come to the ſixe laſt. But before we goe to the expoſition of each by it ſelfe, I deſire you to make a generall and brieſe expoſition of them, which may ſhew how they agree together, as you did when you handled the firſt Table.

Mat. As in the firſt Table the Lord doth teach true religion, that is, the way whereby wee may truelie worſhippe him: So in the laſt hee preſcribeth a holie policie or gouernement vnto men, that they may keep peace among themſelues, and ſerue God with one minde. But for the vpholding of that policie, it is neceſſarie that ſome be ſuperiors, and other ſome inferiors, and that the ſuperiours be armed with ſome authoritie, wherewith they may keepe the ſubiects within the bounds of their duetie, and prouide that the mightier doe no wrong to men of meane qualitie. Now all theſe things doth the Lord ordaine in the fifth commaundement. For by little and little he doth in continuance of time bring vs to all lawful ſubiection, beginning with that which is moſt eaſie to bee borne. Hauing ſetled and appointed Magiſtrates, hee doth preſently adioyne Lawes, by which they ought to gouern their ſubiects peaceably, and keepe them in equitie and iuſtice: From whence alſo euery one ſhould ſeek the rule of loue, that they may liue with their neighbours, according to the will of God.

The ſumme
of the laſt
Table.

And firſt, becauſe nothing is more neceſſarie for the ſafeguard of humane ſocietie, then that the life of man be preſerued, in the ſixt commaundement the Lord forbid-

death murther, and also commandeth that euery one preserue the life of his neighbours, no otherwise then their owne. When he hath taken order for the safegard of mens liues, because men are mortall, in the seuenth commandement, forbidding whoordome, he enioyneth mariage to all men that haue not the gift of continency, to the ende mankind may be preserued and encreased. And because a family or household followeth mariage, to the sustaining whereof riches are required, in the eight commandement he appointeth to euery one proprietie of goods, while he forbiddeth theft, wherewith quiet possession is disturbed and troubled; and doth also command, that we labour to get riches, both for our owne vse, and to giue to the poor. Afterward, because it cannot be (such is the desire and couetousnesse of men) that goods can bee enjoyed of vs, but that oftentimes there arise strifes and controuersies, which the Magistrates cannot appease, except they plainly know the trueth of the matter, in the ninth commandement the Lord forbiddeth false witness-bearing, which is no small hinderance to the ending of controuersies, and doth command that we speak the truth, both before the Magistrate, and elsewhere in all kind of matters. Finally, because the Law-giuer is spiritual, he would teach vs that his Law also is spiritual: that is, that it requireth not only outward obedience, as the lawes made by men do, but euen the inward affection of the hart. Therefore vnder the name of concupiscence, which he forbiddeth in the last commandement, he requireth also this, that we obey him with all our hart, so as there be not any thing in vs, be it neuer so little, that is contrarie to his will.

The first commandement of the Law.

Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy daies may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

Theoph. Let vs goe to the particular exposition of each commandement of the last Table. And let vs begin at the first, which is the first. These be the words of it; Honor thy father and thy mother, &c. Of how many parts standeth it?

Mat.

Mat. Of two, the first is a precept, namely that we honor father and mother: the other is a promise made to the keepers of this commandement, which is, that they shall liue long: wherein secretly is contained a threatning against such as breake it.

Theoph. That we may clearely vnderstand the former part, two questions are to be determined of vs. First whom God comprehendeth vnder the name of parents: And secondly what is to be vnderstood by the name of Honour. Answer therefore to this question.

Mat. Vnder the name of parentes they all be comprehended, who by any meanes in respect of their office are bound to do the dutie of parents toward vs, namely they that ought to haue care for our instructions, health, life, preservation of our goods, credite and peace. For in these things is contained the dutie of paréts toward their children. Therefore vnder the name of parents, are to be vnderstood, first

VVho be comprehended vnder the name of parents.

1. Gardians and tutors, that be to vs in stead of paréts.
2. Magistrates, who also be called fathers of the country.
- 3 Ministers of the Church, and Schoole-masters, which be our spirituall parents.
4. Husbands toward their wiues.
5. Masters toward their seruants.

Theoph. Wherefore did God comprehend all these aboue mentioned, vnder the name of parents?

Mat. Because, such is the naughtinesse and pride of mans nature (for it is swollen with the desire of greatnesse and dignity) that it hardly endureth to bee subiect vnto any. For this cause, that superiority, which by nature is most amiable and least enuied, is propounded for an example, that our high minds might the more easily bow, and bee made acquainted with subiection.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other question. Wherein consisteth the honor which we are commanded to giue to our parents?

VVhat the word Honor signifieth,

Mat. It consisteth in three things:

1. First, in outward salutation, proceeding from the inward

ward reuerence which wee ought to yeelde vnto them; which shall be done, if we acknowledge them to be the ministers of God for our good.

Act. 5. 29.

2. Secondly, in obedience, which wee yeelde to their commandements; so as they be not contrarie to the will of God: for then, by the rule of *Peter*, we ought to obey God rather then men.

3. Thirdly, that, in their pouertie we releue them with our wealth. And therewithall it is to bee obserued, that God doth not onely prescribe a rule to inferiours, whereby they may giue due honor to their superiours, but doth also teach superiours their duty which they ought to do to their inferiours.

Theoph. What if the superiours faile in their dutie, are not the inferiours discharged from the honor due to them?

Mat. No not so: for our sinnes are not excused by the sinnes of others. Moreover, the obedience we giue them is directly referred to God, of whome it is commaunded, and not properly to themselves.

Theoph. We haue stayed long enough vpon the former part of this commandement: let vs therefore come to the other: and that is a promise, the words whereof bee these; *That thou maiest liue long in the land vvhich the Lord thy God giueth thee.* To the explaining whereof there be foue things, whereof I will aske thee.

1. First, why the Lord ioyned a promise to this commandement, rather then to the rest of the commandements of this latter Table?

2. Why he promised long life, rather then any thing else?

3. Whether we receiue benefite by long life, which is subiect to so many troubles?

4. What that land is, whereof mention is made in this place?

5. How this promise is fulfilled? seeing it is certaine, that sometimes, obedient children bee taken away by vntimely death, and the stubborne and disobedient liue long. Now therefore answere to the first. What is the cause that the Lord ioyned a promise to this commandement?

Mat.

Mat. He teacheth superiours, by his owne example, how they ought to behaue themselves toward their inferiours; namely, to allure them to obedience rather by gentlenesse and promises, then by seueritie and punishments.

Theoph. Go forward, and in like sort answer to the second. Why is long life promised by God, rather then any thing else?

Mat. The promise is very fitly applyed to the commandment it selfe: for it teacheth good and obedient children, that if they honour the instruments or meanes of this their life (namely their parents) they shall long enjoy it. But on the contrary side, it threatneth death to the disobedient; because they be altogether vnworthy to haue the vse of that benefite, the instruments or meanes whereof they honour not.

Theoph. The third point followeth. What are we the better for long life, seeing it is subiect to so many afflictions?

Mat. I grant indeed that this corporall life, if it be separated from the fauour of God, is most miserable & vnhappy: but it is a blessing to the faithfull. For, continuing in it, we serue to his glory: and sometimes he granteth vs this, that with great peace and quietnesse, we enjoy sundry temporall benefites. Moreouer, this promise is applyed to the common opinion of men. For they account long life for a great blessing.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fourth point. What is that land, whereof the Lord maketh mention in this place?

Mat. In respect of the Israelites, it is to be vnderstood of the land of Canaan; which they had receiued of the Lord, to possesse it: but in respect of vs, it is extended a great deale further. For, where soeuer we be in the world, we haue right of dwelling there, from the Lord, whose the earth is.

Theoph. The last point is behind, How this promise is fulfilled? seeing it is certaine, that often times obedient and good children die young, and the disobedient liue long.

Mat. That is proued by the examples of *Absolon*, *Core*, *Dathan*, *Abiron*, and of the sonnes of *Hely*. Dayly experience also confirmeth it, of stubburne and disobedient children:

children: for they be for the most part seene, either in prisons or vpon the gallowes. Contrariwise, the good and obedient, for the most part, haue long life, with great quietnesse and peace. But, if at any time it fall out otherwise, we must remember that all the promises of God concerning earthly things bee with condition; namelic, so farre foorth, as he shall knowe them to bee expedient, both for his owne glory, and for our saluation. When therefore god doth betimes call his out of this life vnto himself, he prouideth farre better for them, then if he gaue them long life. For, he taketh them from the miseries of this world, and putteth the into the possession of eternal life. On the other side, sometimes hee giueth the wicked long life; but so weake and full of milerie, that it is more grievous then death it self. For ~~this~~ cause, *Moses*, repeating the law of god declareth that promise, in these words: *That it may be well with thee in the land vvhich, &c.* But, if it fall out otherwise it is for the cause which was at large set foorth by vs, when we entreated of afflictions. For, in that place, wee taught, wherfore the Lord will haue the wicked sometimes to liue long and happily in this world, and the godly to suffer all kind of afflictions. Notwithstanding, that saying of *Salomon* abideth true; *Although the sinner commit euill an hundred times, and God prolongeth his daies, yet I know that it shall be well with them that feare the Lord.*

Dist. 6. 3.

Eccle. 8. 12

The sixth commandment.

Thou shalt not kil.

Theoph. Hauing finished the treatise of the fift commandment, we are to come to the sixt. How many parts be there of it?

Mat. Two.

1 First, the forbidding of murther.

2 The commanding of keeping peace and friendship with our neighbours.

Theoph. How large is the word killing?

Mat. It containeth all the degrees and steppes by the which we come to it; yea, indeede, all those things, where-
by

The exposi-
tion of the
last part.

by we are brought and stirred to commit murther, according to the third rule.

Theoph. Rehearse those steps or degrees.

Mat. They be three. The first whereof is hatred conceived in the heart: forasmuch as it is in plaine words forbidden of *Moses*; *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.* *Lex. 19. 17.*

Theoph. What if our enemy be a wicked man, is it not lawfull to hate him?

Mat. We may indeed hate his sins; but not his person. But we must diligently beware of two extremities, where in we do sin on either side.

The first is, that we hate not the person, for his sin.

The other, that we loue not the sinne, for the persons sake.

Theo. Let vs come to the second degree, by the which we come to murther.

Mat. It is anger: for it is a declaration of the hatred lying hid in the heart.

Theoph. Doe you thinke it altogether vnlawfull to bee angry with any?

Mat. I do not thinke so. For, anger is a naturall affection: wherein if moderation be kept, it deserueth as much praise, as the two extremities deserue dispraise.

Theoph. What is that moderation?

Mat. When vvith zeale for the glory of God, or vvith iust sorrow vve be angry, because iniury is done vnto vs vvithout our desert, and that, keeping a mean, & vvith this caution, that we neither speake nor do any thing, that is against the honor of God, Christian modesty, and the loue of our neighbour. In vvich sense *Paule* commandeth; *Be Ephes. 4. 26* angry, and sinne not.

Theoph. Let vs consider of the two extremities of anger: and first let vs speake of that which sinneth, in exceeding.

Mat. We do then fall into it, when we be angry rashly, that is, without a lawfull cause: or else when, being moued for a iust cause, we do passe the boundes of moderation, speaking or doing the things that be against the honour of God, neighbourly charitie, and Christian modestie.

But

But that falleth out, when we be so possessed with that affection, that the iudgement is troubled, and reason it selfe is darkened: for then for a time, we are like vnto mad me, that know not what they do. For this cause *Iames* saith;

Iames. 1. 20 The wrath of mā performeth not the righteousness of God.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other extremitie. How doe we sin in the defect or want of anger.

Mat. When, preceiuing that God is offended, or our credit hurt without cause, wee are notwithstanding not mouued, as our duety requireth; which would haue vs not to suffer euils; but that according to our callings we should set our selues against them. Hence it was, that *Moses* was so angry in the wilderness with the Israelites, whom hee saw worshipping the golden Calfe with idolatrous worship; *Iohn Baptist* with the Scribes and Pharises, and *Iacob* with his father in law, *Laban*. *Moses* indeed being mouued with most iust anger, drew out the sword, because he was a Magistrate. *Iohn* vsed most shaipe and vehement reprehensions, because he was a minister of Gods word, & had to do with hypocrites, and men hardened in their sinnes. *Iacob* dealeth with moderate and gentle admonitions, because he was a priuate person, and his owne matter was in question.

Theoph. The third step, by the which men come to murder, is behind,

Mat. It is euerie hurt offered to the person of our neighbour: whereupon also sometimes enlueth murder it selfe, which fault is indeede most grieuous in the sight of God. As appeareth by that which the Lord saith, that hee abhorreth the man-slayer; & by the penalty, appointed by him selfe, vnto men-killers. For he ordained, that not only men, but also the very brute beastes that had slaine man, should be put to death. For which cause he forbade his people the eating of bloud. For, by that ceremony, he woulde shew how much he abhorred the shedding of bloud, and consequently murder.

Lemit. 7. 26

Theoph. Is there any speciall cause, which maketh murder to be esteemed so hainous a sin before God?

Mat. There is; and he doth declare it himselfe in the ninth

ninth Chapter of *Genesis*. For, after these words, *Whoso sheddeth mans blood, by man his blood shall be shed*, presētly he addeth, *because in the image of God made he man*. By which words he teacheth, that his owne image, which he hath engrauen in man, is wronged and misused by manslaughter.

Theo. But whether was that image, or likenesse of God, blotted out in man by originall sinne, as it hath bene saide by thee in the second Chapter of the former booke?

Mat. It was indeed: but not so farre, that there bee no steps of it at all remaining. For the spirituall gifts (as one of the ancients saith) giuen of God to men, for their saluation, were by original sin taken away; such as bee the true knowledge of his Maiesty, & of the worship due vnto him: But the naturall gifts, that is, such as concerne this life, were onely corrupted, as vnderstanding and reason, so far forth as they respect humane things; but they were not altogether taken away, as experience it selfe doth sufficiently witnesse.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement: and withall let vs consider of the vertues, which are commanded in it.

Mat. The meaning thereof is this; that we be meeke, louing peace and concord, gentle, peace-makers, and desirous of reconciliation. Briefly, in this cōmandement, God requireth foure things of vs: the first two whereof do shew what is to be auoided; & the latter two, what is to be done of vs, to the fulfilling of it.

Theoph. Rehearse the first two.

Mat. That we hate no man; much lesse that we hurt either by words or deed. Secondly, that, if we be offended, we follow the counsell of *Paule*, that we auenge not our selues: but suffer the iniury patiently, leauing vengeance vnto God, who claimeth it to himselfe; *Vengeance is mine, I will repay it.* For this cause also, in another place, hee is called the GOD of vengeance, or GOD the auenger. *Rom. 12. 19.*
Psal. 94 1.

Theoph. But, while we beare iniuries patiently, do wee not giue our enemies occasion to bee more cruell and

fierce vpon vs? according to our manner of speech; that wolues be more fierce vpon such as play the sheepe.

Mat. 5. 39.

Mat. It is indeede certaine, that our enemy sometimes waxeth prouder, & more insolent, because of our meeknesse; but this is nothing to the matter. For we ought to be ready rather to beare diuers iniuries, then to reuenge that which we haue receiued; and that by the commandement of Christ, *Resist not euill: but who so shall strike thee on thy right cheeke, turne to him the other also.* And this is the true sēse of that place. For, the Lord wold not haue vs, when we haue receiued one iniurie, to pul another vpon our selues; as the words at the first sight seeme to require. For it were a sin, not to take heed of an iniury fore-seene; especially whē opportunity is offered vs. For, Christ himselfe, and after him *Paul*, when they were stricken vpon the cheeke, did not turne the other; but did greatly finde fault & complaine of the iniury done vnto them. But concerning that prouerbe, that *the wolues bee fierer vpon such as play the sheepe*, it is a very deuise of the duel, and therefore most false. For, whosoever in that behalfe doth imitate sheepe is safe from the assaults of all wolues, being protected by the crooke or staffe of that chiefe shepheard of our soules. But, on the contray side, whosoever, reuenging his iniuries, imitateth the wolues, he goeth out of the fould of Christ (into which they onely bee admitted, that be indeed sheepe) & offereth himselfe a prey vnto *Sathan*: of whom *Peter* saith, He goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom to deuoure.

1. Pet. 5. 8.

Why Co-
claymes v-
geance to
himselfe.

Theo. Why doth the Lord challenge to himselfe the office of reuenging, and so earnestly forbiddeth vs, that we reuenge not?

Mat. It seemeth to be for three causes; the first because he himselfe is specially offended with the iniury done vnto vs.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because, being our chiefe Lord, he ought much more to be reuerenced of vs, then man which is his creature. As often therefore as we despise and breake his commandements, doing iniury vnto any, is not the offense especially done against God?

Theoph.

Theoph. Declare another cause.

Mat. Because he doth a great deale better knowe the greatnesse of the iniury, then doth he that is injured: for he pearceth into the hidden and most secret thoughts of men.

Theoph. Declare the last cause.

Mat. Because he hath the chiefe power to reuenge iniuries, as he shal know to be right and expedient, which we cannot do. For he sometime increaseth the iniury, which thought to haue reuenged it. But although wee had that power in our selues, the affections that rule vs, would carry vs beyond the bounds of moderation. For these causes hath the Lord challenged vengeance to himselfe, and promised that he will indeed repay it, & so he hath freed vs fro that labour, & those discommodities, which might hurt vs in reuenging. But that he might take from vs all excuse, he hath appointed the Magistrate, which in his name shuld execute vengeance, and hath for this purpose armed him with strength and authority, that with a stayed minde he should consider the greatnesse of the offence, to punish it without any troublous passion, and repress the boldnesse of those which haue hurt vs.

Theoph. Is it therefore lawfull to fly to the Magistrate, and to pursue the punishment of them that haue hurt vs?

Mat. It is lawfull: for we seeke after a sort to fly to God himselfe, when we craue the help of his ministers, so as it be done without any affection of reuenge, hauing this onely in our minds, to helpe forward common peace, while we call those to punishment, of whom it was disturbed & broken.

Theoph. What if the Magistrate refuse to helpe, or if we cannot go to him, what thinkest thou is then to be done?

Mat. The whole matter must be committed to God, which one day will take vengeance, both vpon him that hath done vs the wrong, and also vpon the Magistrate, which in this behalfe hath failed in his duetie. And indeed this is the best way: for, if we our selues will reuenge when we be able, we shal do farre more hurt to our selues, then to our aduersary. For we shall hurt but the goods of

the body of our enemies: but we shall so hurt our conscience, that we bring our owne soule into extreame hazard of vtter perishing. I omit the discommodities that commonly arise of it, while the Magistrate demandeth an account of the fact. Therefore the best is to beare iniuries patiently; for by that means we do not onely turne away from our selues many inconueniēces, & innumerable troubles & dangers; but also the Lord, to whom our moderation & obedience is seene, bestoweth his fauour & all kinde of blessings vpon vs. And yet the reuenge that is deferred, is not taken away: for the Lord wil repay it farre more grievously, then if we our selues had assayed to do it.

Theoph. It is therefore monster-like, that men be so desirous of reuenge, and that there be so few, which in this behalfe suffer themselves to obey God,

Mat. It is indeede; and thereby it appeareth that we be the children of *Adam*, and heires of sin, while wee doubt not to make our selues equall with God.

Theoph. Wherefore?

Mat. Because the Lord chalengeeth reuenge to himselfe alone. But there is nothing that man desireth so feruently: in so much as many times he offereth his owne life vnto all dangers, that in this point he may haue his desire. Therefore, they onely that haue put off the old *Adam*, and put on the new, be able to ouercome these euill affections, and to leaue vengeance vnto God.

Theo. Let vs come to those two last things, which the Lord requireth of vs to the fulfilling of this commandment. Declare the first.

Mat. That we should goe to him, with whom we bee at variance, to be reconciled according to the commandment of Christ: If thou bring thy gift vnto the altar, and there remembreth that thy brother hath ought against thee, leaue thy gift there before the altar, and go thy waies, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come to offer thy gift. Now he teacheth by that ceremony of the Law, which was then in vse that all the worship which wee offer vnto God, is displeasing vnto him, so long as we be at variance with our neighbours.

Moreouer *Paule* warneth, that this reconciliation be soone made, and that it bee not put off from day to day. For he saith: let not the Sunne go down vpon your wrath. Which indeede is the most fit remedie to break off hatred, and to bridle reuēge. For, euen as diseases and sores at the first being easie to be cured, by delay are made incurable, (and that more is) deadly: so hatred will growe past cure, if thou repress it not speedily. For this cause *Paul* after these wordes, let not the Sunne goe downe vpon your wrath, by and by addeth, neither giue place to the diuell.

Theoph. Wherefore doth he adde these words?

Mat. Because hatred, if it be neuer so little a time hidde in our minds, maketh an entrance for the Diuell, who hauing entred vpon our hearts, doth so wholly possesse them, that refusing reconciliation, he stirreth vs vp to the desire of reuenge, till at length he haue throwne vs headlong to destruction.

Seeing therefore he is so hurtfull a ghest, there is cause that betimes we shut the doores against him, by vnfained reconciliation to our brother.

Theoph. There is yet remaining another point concerning those things which we are bound to do for the fulfilling of this commandement.

Mat. This it is: After we haue diligently done our duety, if our aduersarie do obstinately refuse reconciliation, wee leaue not off to loue him, to pray vnto God for him, and in all things to pleasure him, according to the commandement of Christ; Loue your enemies, blesse those that curse you, do good vnto them that hate you, and pray for them that hurt you and persecute you, that you may be the children of your father that is in heauen. Hither also may be referred the exhortation of *Paule*; If thine enemy hunger, giue him meate, if hee thirst giue him drinke: For if thou doe this, thou shalt heape coales of fire vpon his head.

Finally, that also is to be marked, which *Paule* presently addeth; Be not overcome of that which is euil, but overcome euil with good.

The seventh commandment.

Thou shalt not commit adulterie.

Theoph. Let vs come to the seventh commandment of the Law. How many parts be there of it?

Mat. Two. In the first he forbiddeth adulterie, in the last he commandeth chastitie.

Theoph. What doth the Lord vnderstand by the name of adulterie?

The exposition of the first part.

Mat. Not only the company of man with woman out of marriage, but also all kind of filthinesse, by the which man may be defiled. Moreouer, all the affections of concupiscence; and finally whatsoever stirreth vp vnto lust, & nourisheth it. Of which sort are

Vnlawfull touchings.

Wanton apparrelling of the body.

Filthy speech.

Vncleane songs.

Filthy reading.

Too familiar company with those, who it is very like be led with lust.

Wanton looks.

Idlenesse, that is the mother of all vices, and namely of whoredome.

Dancings, which are most manifest stirrers and prouokers of lust.

Seeing therefore it is certain (according to the saying; *Eccle. 3. 27* He that loueth danger shall perish in it) that we are by nature prone vnto lust: except we diligently take heed of all these prouocations, it will verily come to passe that at length we shall be driuen to the very act it selfe: which sin notwithstanding is before God esteemed most hainous, especially in those that professe the name of Christ.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Paule giveth a reason in these words: Do you not *1. Co, 6. 15.* know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Know you not, that

that he which is coupled with an harlot, is one body with the harlot: For he saith, they which were two shall bee one flesh. But he which is ioyned to the Lord, is one spirit. Fly fornication; euery sin that a mā doth is without the body: but hee that committeth fornication, sinneth against his owne body.

But if the iniury be great that is done vnto Christ, verily that must not be thought little that is don to our neighbour. For there followeth vpon this, the staine of honest families. Moreouer maidens, otherwise to haue bene well bestowed, are thus not seldome brought to an hainous offence, to their dishonor and punishment. But the iniurie shall be greatest, if adulterie be committed, that is, if either the man or the woman, or both of them be married. For so the faith of mariage is stained, and the band broken: the whole family is ouerthrowen, and sometimes bastards be suborned for lawfull children, vnto whom the inheritance commeth. For this cause the Lord ordained in the Law, that the adulterer should die the death.

Leu. 20. 10.

Deu. 22. 22

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement. Is there any other thing to be obserued in it, beside the chastitie which we ought to keepe?

The exposition of the second part

Mat. There is. Namely that God commandeth mariage to all those, that are not euen inwardly indued with the gift of continencie. For as *Paule* saith, it is better to

1. Cor. 7. 9.

Theoph. Seeing you haue made mention of mariage, I would haue you shew the causes, why it was ordained.

Mat. They be three.

1. First, procreation of children.
2. Mutuall helpe one of another.
3. The auoiding of fornication.

Theoph. Which is the chiefe of these causes?

Mat. The first, in respect of God, namely the increase of mankind: but in respect of vs, the last, namely the auoiding of fornication.

Theoph. Why sayest thou, that this is the chiefe in respect of vs?

Mat. Because it layeth vpon vs a necessitie of marrying,

which the other two doe not. For this cause, *Paule* sayeth; For the auoiding of fornication, let euerie man haue his owne wife, and let euerie woman haue hir own husband. Howbeit hee speaketh to those that haue not the gift of continencie, whome he expressly commaundeth in those words to marrie. Notwithstanding, heede must be taken, that we defile not so holy an ordinance, by dissolute wantonnesse. Of the which thing we are warned by the Apostle, when he saith; Mariage is honorable amongst all, and the bed vndefiled.

Theoph. What noteth he in this testimony?

Mat. We are by it admonished, that although the Lord hath ordained marriage to be a remedie against our infirmitie, it may not therefore be abused to vnbridled pleasures, forasmuch as the chastity of marriage forbiddeth it. For if the honestie of marriage doe hide the filthinesse of incontinencie, it must not therefore be continually a stirring vp or prouoking of it. Wherefore, such as bee married may not thinke all things lawfull for them according to the lust of the flesh; but let them carrie themselves modestly one towards another in the feare of the Lord, so dealing that they do not any thing at all vnbecoming the honesty and temperance of marriage. Wherefore also *Paule* warneth vs saying: Let euery of you know, to possesse his yeffell with holinesse and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence as the Gentiles which know not God.

2. *Thes.* 4. 4.

The eight commandment.

Thou shalt not steale.

Theoph. How many parts bee there of this eight commandment?

Mat. Two. The first, the forbidding of theft: the other a commandment contrarie to the prohibition, namely that we labor to defend and helpe forward the profits and commodities of our neighbour euen as our owne, and to helpe the necessitie of others.

Theoph. What doth the Lord comprehend vnder the name of theft?

Mat. A.

Mat. All euil trades and deceits, by the which we hunt after other mens goods, & seek to get them to our selues: which is vsually done fūe waies.

1. First, by sacriledge, when a man taketh to himselfe the goods dedicated to God.

2. Secondly, by robberie, when any getteth to himselfe any thing of another mans by open or secret force.

3. Thirdly, by fraud or legerdemaine, when any selleth counterfeit wares for good: or by prating exacteth a greater price, or else deceiueth by a false measure or waight.

4. Fourthly, by vsury, when any for lending mony requireth gaines more then the lawes allow, which indeede hurteth both lender & borrower, the former in his goods, the other in his soule.

Theoph. Thou dost not therefore condemne that gain, which is taken according to order of law.

Mat. I condemne it not.

Theoph. But how agreeth it with the saying of Christ, *Luk. 6. 35.* lend looking for nothing againe?

Mat. It is to be vnderstood of the poore, to whome if we be commanded to giue; much more to lend, looking for nothing. But when we lend to the rich, which bee able to restore and that with increase, who also for the most part are wont to borrow to make gain by it, I see not what letteth but that we may follow the law of the Magistrate, so as it be not against the rule of charitie. For he that borroweth maketh more gaine of it if he be thriftie, then doth he that lendeth it.

Theoph. There must therefore respect be had of him that borroweth; it must also be enquired, why hee doth it, and whether he be thriftie, or a riotous spender.

Mat. I thinke so: for if it be likely that he wil wastfully spend that he borroweth, it ought not to be lent.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fift meane, by the which a man doth vniustly conuey to himselfe another mans goods.

Mat. It consisteth in a more hidden kind of deceiuing, namely, when any vnder colour of lawe stealeth other mens goods: which they do that peruert the law. But vnder

these kinds be comprehended, the fauourers of theft, the receiuers, and all they which by any meanes giue their consent vnto theft.

Theoph. Is nothing else contained vnder this prohibition?

Mat. Yes verily, namely whatsoever may be a prouocation to theft.

Theoph. Rehearse them all.

Mat. First of all couetousnesse, that is, desire of riches; which the Apostle affirmeth to bee the roote of all euils, because there is no wickednesse, be it neuer so hateful, whereunto men are not driuen and brought by that wicked desire.

Secondly, prodigality, because when a man hath wastefully spent his owne goods, he is stirred and moued to get the goods of other men by vnlawfull meanes.

1. *Tim.* 6. 10 Last of all, idlenesse, for by it men be brought to pover-
ty, by meanes whereof they fall to theft. For this cause *Paul* warneth, Let him that stole, steale no more. But let him rather work with his hands the thing that is good, that he may giue to him that needeth.

Theoph. Now are wee come to the other part of this commandement. What is contained in it?

Mat. First, that to our power wee preserve the goods of our neighbour, which in the Scripture is called iudgement, where in many places it admonisheth vs to doe iustice and iudgement. For by the name of iustice hee vnderstandeth this, that wee giue vnto euery one his right: and by iudgement, that we giue no consent to any iniurie done to our neighbour, but that wee put it away so farre forth as in vs lieth.

Secondly, we be commanded to deale with our neighbours according to charitie, seeing God hath giuen vs goods, to bee stewards of them, to vse them our selues, so farre forth as necessitie requireth, and to help the poore and needy. But whosoever keepeth not this rule, hee conueigheth to himselfe other mens goods.

Theoph. Dost thou thinke therefore, that they which helpe not the poore and needy, be before God accompred
guilty

guiltie of the sinne of theft?

Mat. Yea verily. And indeed of a far greater theft, then if a Bailife of husbandrie, should refuse to pay his Lorde the fruits of his farme. For, whatsoeuer goods we haue, be the Lords, and he hath giuen them vnto vs vpon this condition, that we should pay a yeerly rent, the gatherers and receiuers whereof he hath appointed the poore. Whosoever therefore refuseth or draweth backe to help the poor, are guiltie before God, not onely of theft, but also of sacrilege, and therefore be altogether worthy, whom hee may deprive of all good things, seeing they do not according to their duety acknowledge him, from whome they haue them all.

Theoph. There is therefore a great number of robbers of God.

Mat. A very great number indeed. For a man shall find very few which in this behalfe doe their duetie. But this ariseth vpon a false opinion, wherewith rich men deceiue themselves: namely, because they imagine that all the goods they haue, whether they came by inheritance, or were otherwile gotten, bee so their owne, that they bee wholly and altogether left to their owne will. And therefore that they be not bound to helpe such as neede, if they list not. Moreouer, couetousnesse is ioyned to this vaine imaginatiō, which so shutteth vp in the bowels of mercie, that they become vtterly vnnmerciful. And that for the most part falleth out with them that are most wealthy. For euen as couetousnesse most commonly springeth from plentie and abundance, so is it faire more fitly nourished and strengthened by it, then by pouertie.

Theoph. There want not some which thinke, that these two words, *mine*, and *thine*, breede all the stirres, wherewith the world in this part of it is troubled at this day: and doe asseigne, that things should bee best ordered, if there were such communitie of goods, as they dreame was vsed among the Christians a little after the death of Christ.

Mat. Whosoever goe about to defend that communitie, they think themselves to be wiser then God himself, which

which is the author of the proprietie of goods. This indeed is true, that the most part of men do abuse it, whereupon doe rise the innnumerable confusions, which euery man seeth in the world. But when we vse it as it is meet, and according to the meaning of this commandement, it bringeth forth fruits most conuenient for the furthering of Christian charity, and the preservation of humane societie.

Theoph. Now describe me those that abuse the propriety of goods against the meaning of this commandement.

Mat. They be of three kinds. In the first place they are to be put, which say; Whatloeuver is mine, is mine; but whatloeuver is thine, is mine. That is, mine owne is not sufficient for me, but I doe also gape for thine. And in this number are they all to be reckened, that by any ill meanes get the goods of other men to themselves.

In the second place we will set them that say; That that is mine, is mine; but that which is thine, is thine. That is, I will not conueigh thy goods to my selfe, neither also will I giue thee any part of mine. And this kind of men refrain indeed from taking away that which is an others, but they cannot abide to pleasure or freely to do good vnto any.

In the last ranke wee will place them, which say; That that is mine is thine, and that which is thine is mine. That is; I am readie to giue thee part of that I haue, but with this condition, that thou also wilt pleasure mee with that which thou hast.

The first of all these therefore be further off from charitie then the second, and the second further then the last, who (as it is manifest) come somewhat neerer to it.

Theoph. I see not wherein the last do offend.

Mat. In that they giue no part of their goods, but to those of whom they looke to receiue the like, and therefore obey not Christ giuing them good counsell; When thou makest a dinner, or a supper, call not thy friends, neither thy brethren, nor thy kinsfolkes, nor thy rich neighbours: least they also bid thee againe, and thou be recompenced. But when thou makest a feast, call the poore, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; and thou shalt be blessed, because they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt bee

recom-

recompensed at the resurrection of the iust. And yet Christ doth not altogether forbid rich men to feast among themselves, or to pleasure one another, so as they haue regard of the poore, as it is meete.

Theoph. How then may those words *mine* and *thine* bee lawfully vsed?

Mat. The contrarie altogether must be said vnto that, that is said of those first: namely, that which is mine is thine; but that which is thine is thine owne. That is, I am ready to make thee partaker of that I haue, although thou art not able to do the like for me.

Theoph. But if they, to whome wee communicate our goods, haue such wealth as they be able to restore the vnto vs, is it not lawfull to require them againe?

Mat. It is lawfull; so as at the first we shew that that is our meaning. For it is vnlawfull to demaund that againe which was giuen. Therefore, alwayes with that caution we must require our goods againe: which wee may keepe for the poore, who by their own labor are not able to helpe their necessitie. For they that be able by labor to sustaine their life, and in the meane time become poor by idlenesse and slouth, be altogether vnworthy to be releued. For the Apostle commandeth; if any will not worke, 2. *Thes.* 3. 10. let him not eate.

Theo. But how much are we bound to giue to the poore?

Mat. So much as their necessitie requireth? For *Iohn Baptist* goeth so farre, that he teacheth; He that hath two coates, let him giue to him that hath none. In the which sense, that communitie of goods, whereof thou spakest before, is to be taken. Namely, that none of the faithfull thought any thing that he had to be his own, but did most liberally make all things commō, so far forth as the necessitie of the Church required it. For they sold fields & houses, that they might helpe the poor. This is the true meaning of that place: but we must not imagine any confusion of goods, as if the faithful had liued in comō. For although I should not say, that they could not the do it, the words of *Peter* to *Ananias* be against it; If so be thou hadst kept it, did not thy field remaine to thy self? and after it was sold,

was

was it not in thine owne power?

Theoph. I confesse, that the communitie of goods is so to be taken. Howbeit since that time charitie hath bene very cold in the Church: for now there be none that sell fields or houses to giue to the poore.

Mat. Yea rather they be most few, that distribute any thing to the poore, of their yearely rents and superfluities. Howbeit the cause that is wont to stay vs from liberalitie (namely the feare of pouertie, and desire to increase our wealth) ought especially to kindle vs vp vnto it, if we beleue the promises of God, by the which we are admonished, that they shall neuer come to pouertie, that haue releued the necessitie of the poore; but that such as haue turned their eies from them shall be full of curses. Therefore, he that with his plenty helpeth the poore, lendeth money vnto God, who without doubt, will pay it againe. Nay rather Christ addeth; whoso shall giue a cup of cold water to any of these in the name of a discipule, shall not looke his reward. So that, of the things that we possesse nothing may worthily bee accounted our owne, but that which we giue to the poore: for, all the rest is scarce safe, at least wile by death we shall be taken away from the enioying of them. Those that of charitie bee bestowed vpon the poor, are by their hands sent vp into heauen, shall there be diligently kept of God, and at the last day shall be restored, and that with increase, for so he hath promised.

Theoph. God therefore yeeldeth much of his own right, when he promieth to restore vs, & that with encrease, the things that haue bene giuen vnto the poore, seeing we can giue nothing, but of his owne.

Mat. Thou iudgeth rightly: but this he doth to stirre vs vp to the loue and desire of charitie, whom he seeth to be very slacke and cold in it.

Theoph. What letteth but that the Lord should giue riches vnto all? especially to the faithfull, whome he loueth and hath care of, so as one of vs might well be without the helpe of another.

Mat. The Lord will exercise the charitie of the rich, and the faith and patience of the poore. Now by that
inequalitie

inequalitie of Goods, he preferueth the society of mankinde, which indeed could not stand, if all men were alike in wealth and honour.

The ninth commandment.

Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour.

Theoph. Let vs go on to the ninth commandment: how many parts be there of it?

Mat. Two, as of the former three: for false witnesse is forbidden, and true witnesse is commanded.

Theoph. What doth God vnderstand by the name of false witnesse?

The exposition of the first part.

Mat. All the things wherewith we may hurt our neighbour with the tongue: Howbeit, this kinde is set downe for an example, according to our first rule, because we do most of all hurt our neighbour by false witnesse.

Theoph. I would haue you reckon vp all the seuerall kinds, that be contained vnder this commandment.

Mat. We will therefore deuide them into two sorts. The one, of false witnesse that is borne in iudgement: The other, that is out of iudgement, concerning the things that we haue to doe with, in dealing with men. Touching false witnesse in iudgement, because an oath cometh betweene, and the matter either concerneth the life or goods of our neighbour, that wickednesse cannot be committed, but three abominations come forth at one time together; namely false witnesse, perjury, theft, or murder. For this cause God appointed the same punishment to the false witnesse, which he against whom he witnessed had deserved, if he had bene truly accused. Notwithstanding wee must know, that there be two kinds of false testimonies in iudgement. The one altogether false, such as was that wherewith *Naboth* was accused that he had blasphemed God and the king. The other false only in part, and it is called a cauilt or craftie accusation, when something is either take from the truth, or put to it, or changed, as they did that testified against Christ, affirming that he said; I can destroy the temple of God, and build it againe in three daies; when

Deut. 19. 19

1. Re. 21. 13

Mat. 26. 6.

Ioh. 2. 19. notwithstanding his words were these, Destroy this temple
Of false wit- and in three daies I will raise it vp againe.
nesse, out of *Theoph.* Now we are come to those false testimonies,
iudgement. that are out of the place of iudgement.

Mat. There be diuers kinds of them, but wee will bring
them to three. And they be these;

- 1 Backbiting or slandering.
- 2 Flatterie.
- 3 Lying.

Theoph. Let vs therefore in the first place, speake of
Backbiting. backbiting. What is backbiting or slandering.

Mat. When a man dispraifeth, or mocketh his neigh-
bour being absent, and so empaireth his name and credit.
Which is a most grieuous offense; for a flatterer hurteth
three at once.

- 1 Himselfe.
- 2 The hearer: for he is guilty of receiuing the slander,
which God hath expressly forbidden.
- 3 Him that is mocked or slandered. Howbeit the slan-
der least of all hurteth him: for his name only is hurt; but
the conscience of both the former is hurt, by a sinne com-
mitted against God and their neighbour.

In this ranke are to be placed whisperers, or secret carry-
rales, who indeed do much aggrauate the sinne they haue
committed in receiuing the slander, when as whispering
or muttering it, they giue occasion of many euils, and e-
specially, if it be amplyfied & enlarged of them, which most
Prov. 6. 16. commonly falleth out. For this cause *Salomon* saith; Sixe
things the Lord hateth, but his soule abhorreth the seueñ,
namely him that soweth dissention among brethren. Vn-
der this kind be al those things cōtained, that minister oc-
casion of euill speech, namely an euill or false suspicion of
our neighbour, without an euident & iust cause giuen; for
1. Cor. 13. 5 it is against Christian charity, which, *Paule* saith, is not sus-
picious.

Also a rash iudgement of our neighbour, which is ex-
pressly forbidden by Christ.

Toeoph. What if he, that dispraifeth or reporteth ill of
his neighbor, speake the truth, may that be called backbit-
ting

ting or slanderi^{ng}?

Mat. It ought: for he sinneth in a double respect. First, his mind is estranged from the affection of Christian charity, yea rather he is mooued to that wickednesse, by a desire of speaking euil, or else, that he may get himself praise, by the dispraise of another. Which thing indeed appeareth euen by this, that such backbiters passe ouer all the vertues of their neighbour, but their faults they reckon vp, & not seldome enlarge them.

Secondly, he obie^{ct}eth those things against his neighbour, not with a minde to amend him, neither doth hee make report of them vnto such to whom it appertaineth to admonish him, but he muttereth and whispereth it to him, that cannot apply any remedy to the fault: yea rather he hath an ill opinion of his neighbour; which doth not a little hinder Christian charity.

Theoph. Let vs come to flattery, which thou saidest was the second kinde of false witness bearing, that is out of iudgement. Flattery.

Mat. This vice is not so hainous as the former, for it is not so farre off from Christian charity. Moreouer, the flatterer hurteth onely two, namely himselfe, and him whom he flattereth. But the backbiter, as was said, hurteth three at once. Howbeit this sinne is condemned of the Lord: for the flatterer fostereth the sins of him whom he smoothly flattereth, and doubteth not to colour or paint them ouer with the name of vertue. For this cause the Prophet *Esa. 5. 20.* saith; Wo vnto them that call euill good, and good euill.

Theoph. There is behinde, the third kind of false witness out of iudgement, namely lying.

Mat. There be diuers kinds of this sinne: for some lies proceede from couetousnesse, & they be the most hainous, because they most hurt our neighbour. Others be of infirmity & feare, such as was the lye of *Abraham*, saying that *Sarah* was his sister. Others be of lightnesse for pleasures sake, which notwithstanding be sins: for Christ saith, that whatsoeuer idle word men shall speake, they shall giue account of it in the day of iudgement.

Lying, three kinds of it.

Gen. 12. 13.

Eccl. 20. 2.

Mat. 13. 36

There be some other lyes vnder a colour of loue, and

are called officious lyes, when a man by them thinketh to do his neighbour good. Because he to deliuereth him either from imminent danger, or from losse or reproach; or else when any lyeth for his owne profit, that he may turne such discommodities from himselfe. These bee the chiefe kinde of lies, vnder the which also counterfiting and dissimulation is comprehended, when a man saith that, that is not; as also cloaking and disguising, when a man hideth that that is indeede, to the end the contrary may appeare or seeme to be.

Theo. Whether thinke you all kindes of lies to be sinfull and euill?

Mat. I thinke they be. For the Scripture condemneth all lying, and warneth vs to be true in all things.

Theoph. Is it not theretore lawfull sometimes to hide the truth?

Mat. It is not onely lawfull, but also in many times expedient, in respect both of the common and priuate profit of our neighbours: Yet with this condition, that we be not bound by oath before the Magistrate to declare it. For otherwise, it should not be lawfull for vs to conceale the truth: except the questiō were of the peace of the Church, or the safety of our brethren. For Christian charity requireth, that we should suffer any thing, rather then bring danger to any brother, much more to the whole Church.

As for example, if a man were held prisoner of enemies, he ought rather to suffer all kindes of torments, then to declare any thing, that might be to the hurt of his coutry, or of his neighbour.

Theoph. The conclusion is, that thou thinkest it lawfull, yea sometimes expedient, to conceale the truth; but that it not lawfull to lye vpon any occasion, no not for our own safety, or the safety of our neighbour.

Mat. I thinke so. For the glory of God, who abhorreth lies, ought to be preferred before our owne life, and the loue of our neighbour. Moreover, the rule of charitie requireth it not, that we should by a lye, hide the sin of our neighbour, which by the commandment of God is to be punished.

Theo.

Theoph. Now I see that there is no lye, that is not euil. But thinkest thou not, that it is to be accounted amongst the least sinnes?

Mat. The often vse of it, causeth that we thinke it light; but the Scripture iudgeth farre otherwise; for it saith: O Lord thou shalt destroy them that speake lies. In another place also, reckening vp the sinnes that hinder the saluation of men, it doth by name make mention of this, and numbrell it with murthers, whoredomes, and other heinous offences: for *Iohn* saith; The fearefull and vnbelceuing, and murtherers, and whoremongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and all liers, shal haue their part in the lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Neither doth it that without cause: for it directly fighteth with the nature of god, which is the truth; contrariwise it agreeth with the diuell that is the father of lying. But there is no sin whereunto we do more encline, euen from our birth. Which indeede doth sufficiently shew, that by originall sinne wee haue put off the image of GOD and haue put on the image of the Diuell, as it hath beene declared before, namely in the Chapter of man.

Theo. Enough hath beene spoken concerning the former part of this commandement, that is of the prohibition: it followeth therefore, that we come to the other, that is, to that that is commanded.

Mat. In it is commanded, that we helpe our neighbors, with our testimony, if at any time neede shall so require, both publikely in the place of iudgement, and priuately without that place. Moreouer, that to our power we defend the good name of our neighbour, that wee put farre away the slander raised vp against him, at least witnesse by our lower countenance, that we be not pleased with such speeches. For *Salomon* saith; As the North winde driueth away the raine, so doth an angry countenance the slander. *Pro. 25, 29.* ring tongue.

Last of all, that in all things wee pleasure our neighbour: if hee shall stand in need of our countell, to comfort him in his troubles. If at any time he goe astray, moderately

derately and by the rule of loue to admonish him that he may be brought agine into the right way. These bee the chiefe points, wherein our neighbour may be holpen of vs by our speech, according to the meaning of this commandement.

Theoph. I haue nothing further to aske concerning the exposition of it. Notwithstanding before we come to the tenth commandement wherein the inward lust or concupiscence of the minde is forbidden, I would vnderstand of thee, to what commandement the forbidding of drunkennesse and enuie is to be referred; which are two most common finnes.

Against
drunken-
nesse.

Mat. There be some finnes, which for the diuerse respect of the effects, may be referred to the forbidding of diuerse commandements. Of which sort it is certaine they bee, which thou hast euen now mentioned. For, we may referre drunkennesse to the prohibition contained in the second, third, and fourth commandements of this later Table. For it bringeth forth brawlings; which sometimes murders and slaughters do follow. Moreouer although drunkardes abstaine from the slaughter of others, yet are they guiltie of the murder they commit against themselues, according to our prouerbe; Gluttony slayeth more than the sworde. Furthermore it stirreth vp men to lust. It also bringeth the to pouerty, which theft followeth. Adde hereunto, that whosoever wasteth the gifts of God so intemperatly, with the want whereof many be oppressed, are in that respect holden guilty of theft.

Last of all, when they are heat with wine, the tongue by and by breaketh loose; and vnbridledly, by slander and back-biting shamefully defameth the good name of our neighbour.

Theo. Thou hast indeed reckened vp many finnes that spring from the abuse of a most excellent creature of God.

Mat. But by that, it appeareth, how great the corruption of man is. For, he is not onely an enemy vnto God, but also to himselfe, forasmuch as he abuseth to his owne destruction, the gift that God hath giuen him to his profit & delight. As for example: God hath giuen vs wine to bee nourish-

nourishment, but man turneth it to poyson: God hath giuen it to reioyce our hart, but man changeth it vnto heauines: God hath giuen it to preferue the health of the body, but man altereth it to the sicknesse of body & soule. To conclude (that which is the greatest thing of all) by it man wittingly and willingly transformeth himselfe into a bruite beast, when as he spoyleth himselfe of reason, by the which he differeth from them.

Theoph. Thou saiest true. But I see not what it is, by the which men be allured to that sinne. For, neither glory, nor profit, nor pleasure can be sought by it. For, what pleasure is it if a man drinke, not being athirst?

Mat. No greater then it should be, if a man after dainty chear did presently eate. But therein the very bruite beasts go beyond them in moderation. For, a man shall not see any of them indure to drinke more then is necessary.

Theoph. Hitherto inough of drunkennesse: now let vs speake somewhat concerning enuie.

Mat. It may bee referred to two commaundements. Namely, to the secūd of this later Table, and also vnto this Of Enuie
first. For, seeing hatred is the perpetuall companion of it, it compelleth men very oftentimes to murder, which is sufficiently prooued by the example of *Cain*.

Theoph. Thou iudgeth rightly. For, by enuie *Cain* was stirred vp to kill his brother, because his sacrifice was not accepted of God, but *Abels*. Let vs now see how enuie may be referred to this commandement. Gen 4.8.

Mat. Because by it we are moued to poure out many-fold slanders, and backe-bitings against our neighbour, no lesse then by hatred that continually accompanieth it. But this sinne is most loathsome vnto God, as that which proceedeth of pride, & is contrary to Christian charity, where- 1. Cor. 13. 4.
of *Paule* saith; Charity enuieth not.

The tenth commandement.

Thou shalt not couet thy neighbours house, thou shalt not couet thy neighbours wife, nor his seruant, nor his maide, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

Theoph. The tenth commandement is behind, the mean-
ing

ning whereof I haue heard before, wee are therefore to come to the exposition of the text it selfe. Containeth it any other thing, besides the desiring of our neighbours house and family, in it expresse?

Mat. God meant to rehearse such things, the objects wherof for the most part are wont to affect and moue vs, vnder which hee comprehendeth all of the same kinde; namely all lusts, by the which we are stirred vp to the transgressing of any commandement of the latter Table.

Theoph. Is not that onely lust forbidden in this commandement, whereunto our will giueth consent?

Mat. That lust was contained in the former commandements, wherein not onely wicked deeds, but also counsels, and deliberate consent of the will be forbidden. Therefore in this commandement, the Lord proceedeth further, for he requireth somewhat more of vs, namely that we be not tickled with any kinde of lust, although our will consent not, yea also be against it.

Theo. But how canst thou shew that this is the minde of God?

Mat. Most easily: for the Apostle saith; I had not knowne lust, if the Law had not said, thou shalt not lust. But it is more cleare then the light, that all men without the Law could haue vnderstoode, that concupiscence joyned with consent was sinne: and therefore it is apparant, that the Apostle meant, that the concupiscence which the will resisteth is forbidden by the Law. That may also be gathered by the summe of the Law, wherein the Lord commandeth, that we loue him with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our minde: whereupon it followeth, that we cannot be tickled euen with the least concupiscence, but presely there is something in our mind void of the loue of God, and therefore that is a sin against the Law.

Theoph. So farre forth as I see, God in his law requireth of vs most exact perfection.

Mat. He requireth it indeede. For he would haue vs to be perfect, euen as he himselfe is perfect. And therefore he hath set before vs his law instead of a glasse, and a
most

most perfect patterne of righteousness, that the life of man might bee conformable to the puritie of his diuine Maiestie. Inasmuch as if there were any that did perfectly keepe it, he should in his life perfectly set forth the image and likenesse of God.

The summe of the Law. Mat. 22. 37.

Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thine hart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy minde. This is the first and the great commaundement. And the second is like vnto this; Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe. On these two commaundements hang the whole Lawe and the Prophets.

Theoph. I am thoroughly satisfied concerning the exposition of the Law. Now I would haue the summe of it, which you repeated euen now, to bee declared by you, that I may vnderstand it. And first why hee comprehendeth all the keeping of the first Table, vnder the loue of himselfe?

Mat. This was done, that wee might vnderstand from what fountaine that loue floweth, and what effects it worketh in vs.

Theoph. From whence floweth it?

Mat. From the knowledge of him, and the assurance of the loue wherewith he loueth vs. For it cannot be that we should loue any, except we know him, and doe certainly know that we are loued againe of him.

Theoph. What effect worketh that loue of God in vs?

Mat. Willing obedience. For, wee desire to obey him whom we loue, and the more loue increaseth, the more obedience increaseth. By these things therefore it is plain, that the obseruation of the whole first Table, is contained vnder the loue of God. For, he cannot be loued of vs, but we do in like manner

1. Reuerence him.
2. Put our whole trust in him.
3. Call vppon him, whensoever any necessitie presseth vs.
4. And giue him thanks for his innumerable benefits.

Moreouer, if he be loued of vs, wee will not giue the worship due vnto him alone, to creatures, or to dumbe idols: but according as he requireth, we will spiritually worship him.

If he be loued of vs, it will be our chiefeft delight to speak of him: which will be done of vs with due reuerence and religion, diligently taking heede that wee offend him not in a word.

If (I say) he be loued of vs, his Saboaths shall be our delight, because we may speak with him more commodiously aswell by the holy ministerie of the word and reading, by the which he speaketh vnto vs, as by prayers, by the which we speake vnto him. Moreouer, those delights wil engraue such sweetnesse in our minds, that we shall easilie despise all sports and other worldly things, wherein worldly men are wont to spend those daies.

Hereupon it is plaine, that so many as loue God do keep the whole first Table.

Theoph. But wherefore doth the Lord adde, that God must be loued of vs, with al our hart, with all our soule, and with all our vnderstanding?

Mat. To the end we may know, that our mind and soule ought to be filled with his loue: and therefore it is required, that he might bee most entirely loued of vs aboue all others, aboue parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friendes, goods, yea and our selues also. But if at any time a man should be set betweene two loues, whereof the one were that, that is due vnto God, & the other that, that is due vnto parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friends; & that these two loues can not stand together, so as while we apply our selues to the one, wee neglect the other: then the Lord is to be preferred before all the other, and all other things are to be neglected that wee may follow him. For so Christ himselfe sayeth; He that loueth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of me, and hee that loueth sonne or daughter more then me, is not worthy of me. As if he said, whosouer forsaketh not wife and children, and al his goods, rather then to denie me, is not worthy of me. And that more is, in the same sente he saith; If any com-

meth

meth vnto me, and hateth not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren, and sisters, and euen his owne life, he cannot be my Disciple.

Theoph. But vnlesse I be deceiued, the loue of God doth not wholly but in part, seclude the loue of our neighbour.

Mat. It doth indeed wholly seclude all false loue, but the true loue it establisheth: now that is it, which Christ made the summe of the later Table in these wordes; Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe.

Theoph. Declare vnto me that true loue which is established by the loue of God: then I will demaund of thee why Christ made it the summe of the later Table.

Mat. Then is our neighbour loued of vs, when we loue him onely in God, and for Gods cause. For, if he be loued of vs, either because he is our kinsman, or friend, without any respect to the loue of God, that loue is not Christian but naturall; and agreeth vnto brute beasts. For this cause Christ said; If you loue them that loue you, what thanke shall you haue? for euen sinners loue those that loue them. Luk. 1. 32. Therefore also hath he commaunded the loue of our enemies: for, therein appeareth most manifestly that wherof we now speak, namely, that our neighbor is to be loued for God: for an enemy cannot be loued for his own sake, yea rather, he ought to be hated. But when he is considered in God, then he ceaseth to be an enemy, and is made a neighbour. Euen as therefore all floods do come out of the sea, and doe fall againe into the sea: so our loue toward our neighbour, ought to begin in God, and to ende in God: otherwise it is vitious and euill.

Theoph. Wherefore sayest thou, that this true loue of our neighbour, which thou hast euen now expounded, is established by the loue of God?

Mat. Because it is one loue, but the difference standeth in the objects: for when God saw, that himselfe, because he is inuisible, should hardly be loued of vs, that do so much cleaue to the loue of things that be seene; hee hath set our neighbour before vs as a visible object, in whome hee engraued his owne image, that we should worshipping him by shewing towards our neighbour the same loue that is

Mat. 16.2.

3. Iohn. 4.

20.

due vnto himselfe, & bestow vpon our neighbour, some of those dueties and benefites, which by good right do altogether appertain to his Maieesty: Forasmuch as (according to the saying of *Dauid*) our wel doing reacheth not to him, and indeede he hath no neede of it. Wherefore as no man can rightly loue his neighbour, but he first loueth God, so can no man sincerely loue God, but he doth also loue his neighbour, whom hee hath so earnestly commended vnto vs. Hence is that saying of *Iohn*; If any say, I loue God, and hateth his brother, he is a lyer: For, he that loueth not his brother, whome he seeth, how can he loue God whom he hath not seene?

The. Now I vnderstand what the true loue of our neighbour is, and how it springeth from the loue of God. It is therefore to be seene, why *Christ* setteth it downe for the summe of the latter Table.

Mat. Because as the loue of God containeth the whole obseruation of the first Table, as hath beene said before: so the loue of our neighbour, the whole second Table; so that he be loued of vs as our selues. Which *Christ* did not omit.

Theoph. Declare these things vnto me more at large.

Mat. If we loue our neighbours as our selues, wee shall doe to them, all that wee would haue him doe vnto vs: and we will not do those things, which we would not haue done to our selues. And therefore we will honour parents and other superiours; for if we were in their place, we would be honored. We will do no despite to our neighbor, which we would not suffer to be done to our selues. Wee will not by adulterie defile the wife, sister, or daughter of our neighbour, because we would not haue so great an iniurie done to our selues. We wil not steale his goods; yea rather, if the matter so require, we wil releue his pouerty with our plenty: for so would we haue it done with our selues. We will not beare false witnesse against him, neither backbite him, neither will we vex or mooue him, with scornes, flouts, mocks, and taunts: for wee would take it grieuousslie, if it were done to our selues. To conclude wee will couet nothing that is his, forasmuch as if any coueted our goods,

we would condemne him.

By which it appeareth, that the fulfilling of the second Table is contained vnder the loue of our neighbour, and the breaking of it, vnder the hatred of him.

Theoph. But who is our neighbour, of whome there is mention in this place, and elsewhere in many places in the Scripture?

Mat. Vnder this name be comprehended not only friends, kinsfolks, and alliance by marriage, but also all others, of whatsoeuer sexe, country, condition, or religion they bee; and that more is, our enemies also, which is plaine to gather, by the example alledged by Christ. *Luk. 10. 33.*

But that letteth not a distinction of persons, of whome we ought to helpe some before others, according to the band wherewith we be bound to them, and by name, their faith. For *Paule* saith, Do good vnto all, but especially to the household of faith. In which words hee teacheth, that charitie or loue rightly ordered, beginneth with the faithfull, and afterward is deuied vnto others. For, if our loue (which we taught before) ought to be referred vnto God, verily the neerer any cometh to God, so much the more high degree of it doth he deserue: then, the rest wee ought to referue to our kindred and allies, as euery one shall be ioyned vnto vs by the neerer band. *Gal. 6. 10.*

The other part of this Chapter: For what end good works are to be done, and what is the vse of them.

Theoph. We haue made an end of the former part of this chapter, wherein thou hast declared, what works be worthy the name of good works: let vs therefore come to the other part, which wee appointed to a discourse of their end and vse.

First therefore, I demand, whether the faithfull may be iustified by good works? forasmuch as by regeneration they be made fit to do them. *The faithful cannot be iustified by works.*

Mat. Two things let, that it cannot be so.

Theoph. What are they?

Mat. Because iustification, & therefore saluation, goeth before

before good workes. For, the way which the holy Ghost vseth to make vs able for them, is this, namely that by faith it ioyneth vs with Christ. Whereof Christ himself is witness, when he saith; As the branch can beare no fruit, of it selfe, that is, except it abide in the vine, euen so you except you abide in me. I am the vine: you are the branches; hee that abideth in me, and he in whom I abide, bringeth forth much fruite. For, without me you can do nothing.

*Imputation
is to haue it
accompted
ours.*

Therefore by faith beeing vnited or made one with Christ, we are iustified and sau'd, by the imputation of his most perfect holinesse and righteoulnesse: the effectes or fruits whereof, be the good workes that we do. Therefore, good workes go not before our iustification and saluatiō, but they follow after, as it was well sayd by one of the Ancients. But that which followeth after, cannot be the cause of that which goeth before. By this argumēt Paul proueth that we are not iustified by workes. For he saith: you are sau'd by grace, through faith, & that not of your selues, it is the gift of God: not of workes, least any man should boast himselfe. For, we are his workmanship, created in Christ Iesu vnto good workes, which God hath ordained that we should walke in them. In which words he sheweth, that good workes cannot be sayd to bee the cause of our saluation, because they be done by God himselfe in vs through Christ, after that we be sau'd by faith in him.

Ephes. 2. 8.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other thing, which thou saydest did let, that we are not iustified nor sau'd by our good workes.

Mat. It is more plaine then the former; namely, because to the end a man may be iustified by workes, it is necessarily required, that he haue fulfilled the whole Law, & that hee bee not found so much as sprinkled or wet with anie, euen the very least spot of sinne, before God. For, euen as one little droppe of inke, staineth a whole glasse of cleare water: so one onely sinne is sufficient to ouerthrow all righteoulnesse of workes. For this cause Iames saith; Whosoever keepeth the whole Lawe, and offendeth in one point, is guiltie of all. But it is certaine, that the faithfull in this life, cannot at any time come to the highest degree

1 Iam. 2. 20.

degree of that perfectiō, no not to the middlemost. Therefore the defect or want of righteoulnesse, doth by manie degrees exceede all the ablenesse vnto it, which any may attaine vnto, by the guidance of the holy Ghost. Therefore by workes they ought to looke for the curse onelie, which the Scripture pronounceth against those that haue not perfectly fulfilled the law.

Theoph. How knowest thou, that the faithfull after regeneration cannot fulfill the law?

Whether the faithfull can fulfill the Law.

Mat. Paule doth most plainely witnesse it in his owne person, speaking of the condition of a man regenerated, in these words; We know that the law is spirituall, but I am carnall, sold vnder sin: for to will is present with me, but I find no meanes to performe that which is good. For this cause Dauid saith; Enter not into iudgement with thy seruants: for no man liuing shall be iustified in thy sight.

Rom. 7. 14. 18.

Psal. 143. 2

Theoph. But Luke speaking of Zacharie and Elizabeth, saith; They were both iust in the sight of God, walking in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord without reproofe.

Luk. 1. 6.

Mat. The same thing is also sayde of Noah by Moses; Noah was a iust & an vpright mā in his time. Howbeit, the Scripture sayth not, that they were without sinne; but that they diligently applied themselues vnto righteoulnesse, & laboured to walke in the commandements of the Lord. In which sense the faithfull in many places are called iust or righteous, as well to note that zeale by the which they seek to come to the perfection of righteoulnesse, as also that we may vnderstand, that their obedience, notwithstanding it be imperfect, is as acceptable to God through Christ, as if it were perfect.

Gen. 6. 9.

Theoph. But how knowest thou, that this is the meaning of the Scripture, and that they, who it saith were iust, were not without sinne, seeing the words sound otherwise?

Mat. It is not hard to gather it out of the things which presently after be obserued of the Scripture it selfe: namely, that Zacharie beleeued not the wordes of the Angell, and that Noah was drunken. Moreouer, these things bee plainelie expressed in it. If we say, that wee haue not

1. Ioh. 1. 10.

sinned,

Mat. 12. 36 sinned, we make God a lier, and his word is not in vs. And indeed, if we doe but a little more attentiuely consider of it, what is he that in this life can euer

Loue God with all his heart?

Put his whole trust in him alone?

Perfectly rule his owne affections?

So keepe his tongue vnder, that it sende out no idle words? whereof at the last day, Christ saith, an account must be giuen.

So keepe his eyes in order, that they lust not, and his mind that it thinke no vaine thing?

When he employeth himself about the worship of God, to do it with that affection, namely so perfect, pure, and whole, as it is required of him?

Finallie, who is it, which letteth not many occasions of doing wel, or of doing something better then he doth it, to escape him?

Iob. 3. 20 If our owne heart condemne vs in these, and in manie other the greatest things, God (saith *Iohn*) is greater then our heart, that is, knoweth innumerable sinnes, which we our selues know not. Hence is that saying of *Dauid*: Who vnderstandeth his faults? cleanse me from secret faults.

Psal. 19. 13

Theoph. I haue in thy speeche obserued foure kinds of sinnes, whereof men are guiltie before God:

1. The committing of euill.
2. The leauing of good vndone.
3. Hidden sinnes.
4. The imperfection of the good deedes, which in small number are done of vs.

Which things, if they haue place in the faithfull, I must needes confesse, that they be far off from being iustified by their works.

Mat. There is no doubt, but these be in the verie best, which also the Scripture confirmeth, when it saith; Man drinketh iniquitie as water: as if it sayde, that iniquitie were as familiar and common a thing with him, as to drink. We be all of vs as an vncleane thing, and al our righteoufnesse as filthie clouts. The children of men are vanitie, the chiefe men are liers: to lay them vpon a ballance, they

Iay. 64. 6.

Psal. 62. 7.

are altogether lighter then vanity.

Theoph. Do these things agree to the faithfull, as well as to the vnfaithfull?

Mat. Yea verily; for they of whom these things were written, were faithfull & beleeuers; neuer thelesse, they did reckon themselves also in that number, as *Esay* by name: for he saith; We all are as vncleane things: And againe; all our righteousness is as filthy clouts. But if our iustice & righteousness be such, how I pray thee must it be thought of our vnrighteousnesse and sins?

Theo. Seeing the matter is so, it seemeth altogether to follow, that there is very little difference concerning good

What difference concerning good works, is betwene the faithfull and the vnfaithfull.

works, betwene the beleeuers, and the vnbeleeuers.
Mat. It followeth not, for sinne onely dwelleth in the faithfull, but it raigneth not: Howbeit, in the vnfaithfull & vnbeleeuers, it both dwelleth & raigneth. Therefore euery beleeuer may vse that saying of *Paule*: I do not the good that I would. The vnbeleeuers cleane contrariwise, We do not so much euill as we would: Which howsoever they speake not, they haue it in their mind. As it is to be seen in drunkards, theeuers, fornicatours, ambitious and couetous persons, whose lust can neuer be satisfied. Moreouer, the wicked waxe euery day worse and worse: contrariwise, the faithfull make proceedings in goodnesse, by the which (notwithstanding they be but small) it is apparant that sin is overcome of them.

Rom. 7. 16.

Theoph. But how cometh it to passe, that a beleeuer, being regenerated and lightened with the holy Ghost, can not perfectly obey God?

Mat. Because our regeneration is onely begun in vs, but in this life is neuer perfected. For by that meanes the Lord will keepe vs in humility, as also together with it make place to his owne infinite mercy. Therefore, so long as we liue here, as well our faith, as our repentance, be very farre off from perfection. For there is still behinde in vs, some part of our corruption, which the Scripture calleth flesh, and the olde man: it resisteth or withstandeth the part that is regenerate, which is called the spirit, & the new man. And all these things *Paule* notably comprehen-

deth

Gal. 5. 17. deth in these words; The flesh lusteth against the spirit, & the spirit against the flesh, and these be contrarie the one to the other, so as you do not the things that you would.

The battell
of the flesh
and spirit.

Throph. Wherein standeth this struiuing of the flesh and the spirit?

Mat. 1 The flesh is puffed vp with ignorance, and loue of the world: but the spirit is endued with the knowledge, loue, and feare of God.

2 The flesh struieth to follow it owne pleasures and wicked affections, for it is giuen vnto all sinnes: but the spirit giueth it selfe to this one thing, that it may obey God, and set forth his glory.

3 The flesh is full of distrust and impatience: but the spirit humbleth it selfe vnder the mighty hand of God, resteth in his mercy, and fashioneth it selfe vnto his will.

Finally, the flesh holdeth vs in these earthly things: but the spirit listeth vs vp into heauen.

Moreover, this contrariety breedeth in vs a continuall warfare: for the flesh alwaies stirreth vs vp, and setteth vpon vs, with so many intisements and crafts, that except we take diligent heed, we be easily deceiued and overcome of it. For this cause Christ warneth vs, that wee shoulde watch; Watch & pray, lest ye enter into temptation; (that is, lest you be overcome of temptation) the spirit indeed is ready, but the flesh is weak.

Mat. 26. 41

Throph. Doth the spirit at length go alwaies away with the victory?

Mat. It doth indeede, but not without great labour: for the flesh many waies woundeth vs: for it causeth vs many times to fall into most hainous sinnes. Moreover, although we do often overcome, it ceaseth not to renew the battell. For the diuell the enemy of our saluation, ioyneeth himselfe vnto it, who vseth that domesticall or household enemy, that hee may the more easily enter into our hearts, & at length overcome vs. For this cause *Paul* most feruently desired to be deliuered from it: for hee saith; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer mee from this body of death? He calleth it death, because hee thought

Gal. 3. 24.

thought that continuall battell more grienous then death
it selfe.

Theoph. Now I wil returne to the order of our discourse:
for I see, that the faithfull cannot fulfill the law of God.
And this also I grant, that the faithfull cannot be altogether
iustified by their workes. But may not this be done in
part, so as Christ supply that which wanteth?

Mat. This, doubtlesse, cannot be: for *Iames* saith; Whosoever
keepeth the whole law, and yet faileth in one point, *Iam. 2. 10.*
is guilty of all. Therefore *Paule*, intreating of the way
whereby we attaine iustification and saluation, excludeth
workes not in part, but wholly. As for example: In the
Epistle to the Romanes, after long disputation of this
matter, at length he addeth; We conclude therfore, that
a man is iustified by faith, without the workes of the law: *Rom. 3. 28.*
and in the Chapter following; To him that worketh, the
wages is not counted by fauour, but by debt: but to him *Rom. 4. 4.*
that worketh not, but belecueth in him that iustifieth the
vngodly, his faith is counted for righteousnesse. The same
also he writeth in another place; You are saued by grace, *Ephes. 2. 8.*
through faith, and that not of your seiues, it is the gift of
God: not of works, lest any should boast himselfe. In which
words he doth sufficiently declare, that good workes be of
no account before God, to iustifie & saue vs: but that all
is to be ascribed to the only mercy and grace of God, by
faith in Christ. Moreouer, grace should not be truly grace
in respect of God, if it be not wholly and altogether free:
for workes and it cannot stand together in the matter of
saluation.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because the one destroyeth the other, as the A-
postle testifieth to the Romanes in these words; If we be sa-
ued by grace, it is no more of workes; or else were work no *Rom. 11. 6.*
more worke. Where he sheweth that there is no place for
the grace of God, vntill we haue throwne away all trust &
confidence in our own workes: which thing the same Apo-
stle testifieth, that himselfe did. For, although concern-
ing the righteousnesse which is by the law he were with-
out reproofe, he esteemed all his good workes as dung, *Phil. 3. 6.*
that

that he might be found not hauing his owne righteousnesse, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.

Gal. 5. 4.

In another place also, he warneth vs of the same thing, yee are made void of Christ, as many of you as be iustified by the law, and are fallen from grace. Now he speaketh to those that would ioyne the righteousnesse of the law, with the righteousnesse of faith.

Theoph. But some doe object, that the Apostle, whensoever he saith, we are not iustified by the works of the Law, speaketh of the ceremoniall law, that was then abolished by the comming of Christ, but not of the morall law.

Mat. That is a vaine shift, which also is most easie to be confuted, by the order of the Apostles speech: and first of all in the Epistle to the Romanes (before he draweth out this conclusion, that is in the third Chapter; By the workes of the law, shall no flesh be iustified in the sight of God) in the first Chapter he prooueth at large, that all the Heathen were full of all vnrighteousnesse, fornication, wickednesse, couetousnesse, and other innumerable sinnes. But in the second he sheweth that the Iewes notwithstanding they made a faire shew of outward holinesse, yet were infected and stained with the same sins they cōdemned in others. Whereupon it is plaine that in that place, there is onely mention of morall works, and not of the ceremoniall. Likewise also in the Epistle to the Galathians, where hee doth especially intreate of the ceremonies, he alleadgeth both the sentences of *Moses*, namely the curse to those that fulfill not the whole law, and life to those that keepe it. And in the former indeede he teacheth, that so many as trust to the workes of the Law to bee iustified by them, be vnder the curse, because they cannot wholly and fully keepe it. But in the other, he declareth that there is so much difference betweene the law and faith, that if any man be iustified by faith he cannot in any sort obtaine it by the Law. But it is certain, that alwel the curse threatened to the transgressors of the Law, as the promise of eternall life made to such as fulfill it, are not to be restrained to the ceremonies alone, but are also to bee referred

ferred to the morall Law, and that too by more right: for as much as God (as *Hosea* saith) preferreth mercy before *Hof. 6. 6.* sacrifice. Moreouer, after the Apostle in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians hath affirmed, that we are saued by grace through faith, & that not of our selues, he addeth, but of the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast himselfe. Which words doe most euidently shew, that the Apostle speaketh not of the ceremoniall works, but of morall, which giue men far more large matter of boasting then the ceremoniall do. Finally, when he writeth to *Titus*, that we are saued not by the works of righteousness which we haue done, but by the mercie of god; who seeth not that the Apostle doth especially intreat of inorall workes? to which the title of righteousness agreeth farre better then to the ceremoniall. Which things being so, there is no doubt but that the Apostle whensoever he speaketh of the workes of the Law, to proue that we are neither saued nor iustified by them, doth no lesse meane the morall then the ceremoniall, yea rather that he doth shut out both from the cause of saluation and righteousness.

Theoph. But why doth he so often call them the workes of the Law?

Mat. To teach, that if the works commanded of God, and euen contained in his owne law, be to no purpose to iustifie vs; the the works commanded and deuised by men are much lesse able and fit to doe it.

Theoph. Now do I agree vnto thee. For I perceiue that we are neither iustified nor saued by works, neither in the whole, nor in part, as hath bene diligently proued by thee. And verily (vnlesse I be deceiued) there is great iniury don to the glory of God, while men goe about to darken the force & power of his grace & mercy, mingling the same with the filthinesse of our works. But seeing the matter is so, why did God giue the morall law? Why God gave a Law that we can not keepe

Mat. The Apostle witnesseth, that it was not to the end we should be iustified or saued by it. For he saith, If there had bene a Law giuen that could haue giuen life, surely righteousness should haue bene by the Law: But the Of the vse of the Law, Gal. 3. 12.

The vse of
the Law, in
respect of
the vnfaith-
full,

Scripture hath concluded all vnder sin, that the promise by the faith of Iesus Christ, should be giuen to them that beleue. Notwithstanding it is not vnprofitable to the faithfull, may rather they reape a double benefit by it, wherein be comprehended the ends for the which God gaue it vnto vs. I said to the faithfull, because it hath this only work toward the vnbeleeuers, that their condemnation may be the more heauie: forasmuch as comming to the knowledge of Gods will by it, they do willingly ruine into the contrary.

Theoph. Let vs consider of that twofold benefit which thou saidest the beleeuers reape by it: and declare the first.

Mat. It is noted by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Galathians. For after that he hath shewed that we cannot attaine saluation by the Law, he addeth: wherefore then serueth the Law? It was added because of the transgressions.

Gal. 3. 19.

Rom. 3. 20.

that is, that by the help of it, we might acknowledge our sins, as the same Apostle in another place expoundeth it in these words; By the Law commeth the knowledge of sin. For if wee do examine our works by that perfection which the Law requireth of vs, then it shall appeare most euidently, how many waies we be guilty before god, & therefore what fearefull condemnation we haue deserued.

Theoph. But what profit haue we by that?

Gal. 3. 24

Rom. 10. 4.

Mat. Much. For, as a sicke man, except hee thoroughly feele his sicknesse, and perceiue present danger, wil not go to the Physitian: euen so the feeling of our sinnes, and the danger of eternall death, which we see hanging ouer our heads, driueth vs to seeke for that true Physitian of our souls, Christ Iesus, from whom by faith we may receiue the remedy offered vs in the Gospell: which otherwise wee would haue neglected. Therefore *Paule* saith: The Law was our Schoole master to bring vs vnto Christ. And in another place; Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness vnto euery one that beleueth. And this is the first benefit which he haue by the Law.

Tocoph. Shew briefly the other.

Mat. After that we be regenerated and therefore made

fit to do good works, the the Law teacheth vs whatsoeuer is to be performed of vs, that we may obey God. For, although we cannot come to the perfection whereunto it leadeth vs, yet we must set it before our eyes, as a marke whereat we are to leuell continually, that daily more & more we may strue to hit it. Hereunto appertaineth that exhortation of Christ: Be ye perfect, as your father which is in heauen is perfect. The law therefore is as it were a glasse wherein we may bebold the spots of our soule, and so indeed bee compelled by faith to wash them away in Christs blood. Moreouer, it is a lanterne vnto our feete, which guideth vs that we go not out of the right way fro the path of righteousnesse.

Mat. 5. 48.

Theo. Seeing good works be not the cause of saluation, it seemeth to follow that they be altogether vnprofitable, and therefore that we need not to be greatly careful of them.

Mat. It followeth not. For, God hath deliuered vs out of the hands of our spirituall enemies, namely the Diuell and sinne (saith Zacharie) that we should serue him with holinesse and righteousnesse in his sight, al the daies of our life. *Paule* also confirmeth the same thing in the Epistle to the Ephesians. For, after that he hath affirmed, that we are saued by grace through faith, and that not of our selues, it was the gift of God, not of works; presently he addeth; For we are his workmanship created in Christ Iesus vnto good works, which God hath prepared that we should walke in them. And againe in another place; The grace of God that bringeth saluation vnto all men hath appeared, teaching vs, that denying vngodlinesse and worldly lusts, we should liue soberly, & iustly, & godly in this present world. Thou seest how diligently good works be commended in the Scripture, as those that be acceptable vnto God through Christ, by whose holinesse al their filthinesse and vncleanes-
nesse is couered.

Luk. 1. 75.

Ephes. 2. 8.
9. 10.

Tis. 2. 12.

Theoph. But what vse is there of them?

Mat. The vse is three-fold, and those indeede most profitable. The first, which is also the chiefe, respecteth the glorie of God, that ought to be dearer vnto vs then

A three-fold
vse of good
works.

Mat. 5. 16. our owne saluation, But by them it is especially aduanced, as it appeareth by the words of Christ; Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your father which is in heauē. For this cause *Paul*, warning the Philippians to be full of the fruites of righteousness which are by Christ Iesus, addeth; to the glory & praise of God.

Phil. I. 11.

The second vse respecteth our neighbour. For, by the vprightnesse and integritie of our life, he is prouoked to the same earnest desire and exexcise of godlinesse. I passe ouer the good turnes which he hath by our charity and good works. The third vse standeth in this, that by them our conscience is quieted. For, they be testimonies and witnessses of our faith, and therefore of our saluation.

Theoph. But how can it be, that good workes shall bee witnessses of our faith?

Mat. We haue already shewed the cause before; namely, for that the holy Ghost doth neuer worke faith in our hearts, without repentance, from whence good workes do flow, which therefore be visible or teene testimonies of our inuisible or vnseene faith: euen as the goodnesse of the tree is iudged by the good fruite, and the inward health or soundnesse of a mans body, by the outward disposition of all the parts.

Faith cannot be without good works.

Theo. Therefore, vnlesse I be deceiued, this thou sayest, that faith cannot be without good works.

Mat. I say so. Euen as fire cannot be without heat, and the Sunne without light. And verily faith of it own nature bringeth forth good works. For how can it bee that our hearts should be reformed by faith, so as wee doe embrace the loue wherewith God loueth vs in Christ, but that they be also stricken with loue toward him againe, by meanes wherof they both earnestly desire to obey him, and do labour to auoide rebellion against his maiestie. I adde further, that faith can no more stand together with an euill conscience, then water with fire. For it cannot bee, so long as sinne reigneth in vs, and wee willingly offend God, that we should be assured of his loue, so as we may put our whole trust in him, and repose our hope in his fa-

Hour and goodnesse, notwithstanding that infinite mercie of Christs death to be knowne and perceiued of vs.

Theoph. As far as I see, faith bringeth forth good works, by the which it is after ward preferued in our hearts.

Mat. Yea verily: euen as fire causeth ashes wherewith it is afterward cherished, fed, and maintained. But by these things it is plaine, that it is so far off that faith (which notwithstanding some say) should destroy good workes, that rather by it they are built vp and fortified.

Faith the mother of good workes of which it is after preferued.

Theoph. Seeing then faith cannot bee without good works, it followeth, that all they which boast of it, and doe no good works, be liars, and deceiue themselves.

Mat. It followeth: and that is the disputation of Iames the Apostle against the Libertines, whom he speaketh vnto in these words; Shew me thy faith without thy works, *Iam. 2. 18.* and I will shew thee my faith by my works; whereby hee sheweth, that no man can be certain of his faith, which is invisible, vnles he haue visible testimonies of it, namely good works. Whereupon it is that the same Apostle in the ende of that Chapter concludeth thus; As the body without the spirit is dead, eue so that faith that is without good works is dead: that is, it is not true but a shadow, and a vain empty likenesse of it.

Verse. 26.

Theoph. Therefore wee are neither iustified nor saued without good workes; although neither, of them, nor by them?

Mat. I grant it. For although the kingdome of heauen be not the wages of seruants, but the inheritance of children; yet no man is reckened among the children of God, that is not led by the spirit of God, (as *Paule* speaketh) and therefore doth the works of the spirit, such as be these; Loue *Rom. 8. 14.* ioy, peace, long suffering, gentlenesse, goodnesse, faith, *Gal. 5. 22.* meekenesse, temperance, and such like. Therefore the same Apostle in another place giueth warning, Be not deceived. neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, *23.* nor wârons, nor theeues, nor couetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall inherite the kingdome of God. The same thing also doth Christ himselfe confirme, when he sayth, Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, *1. Cor. 6. 22.*

Mat. 7. 21. shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but he that doth my fathers will that is in heauen.

Mat. 5. 20. And againe in another place; I say vnto you, except your righteousnesse exceede the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.

Theoph. Now do I consent vnto you. and doe acknowledge that good works be not vnprofitable, although wee be neither iustified nor saued by them: Yea rather that they be of speciall vse, and therefore that the faithfull with all their harts should giue themselues to them, forasmuch as they serue

1. To the glory of God,

2. The edification of our neighbour,

3. And to the confirmation of our faith & saluation.

Mat. Adde herunto, that God to whom they be acceptable through Christ, rewardeth the with sundry blessings both spirituall and temporall, according to the promises almost without number contained in his word. Moreover, hither is to be referred the word of Reward, which is vsed in many places in the Scripture: as when *Iohn* exhorteth the faithfull to perseuerance, he saith; Look vnto your selues, that we loose not the things we haue wrought, but that ye may haue a full reward. Christ also speaking of those which suffer persecution for righteousnesse sake, saith; Great is your reward in heauen. In another place also, Whosoever shall giue a cup of cold water onely, to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple, shall not loose his reward.

Theoph. Seeing therefore God promisetht reward to our works, it seemeth they deserue somewhat.

The confusion of merite.

Mat. It followeth not: For that reward proceedeth of his merite and vnderferued fauour, without any desert of ours.

Theoph. Doeſt thou take from the faithfull all meriting with God?

Mat. Not I, but the word of God: wherein, his owne merite is established, and merite is ouerthrowne euen to the very ground; for these two cannot stand together. Furthermore, if any man wil a little more diligently examine the

nature

nature of Merit or Desert, he shall neuer find that it hath any place before God.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because, that in deseruing any thing, this is

1. First required, that wee be nothing in his debt, of whom we desire to deserue.

2. Secondly, that we bring him such things as bee our owne.

3. And last of all, that that which we bring or bestow, be equall, or as much worth, as the thing that we seeke to deserue. If but any one of these conditions faile, it can be no merit or desert. How much lesse therefore if they be all wanting together? But they be wanting in all our good works.

Theoph. Declare these things vnto me one after another particularly.

Mat. First, whatsoeuer good works may be performed of vs, are due vnto God by a double right, namely of our creation and adoption. Hereupon is that saying of Christ warning his Disciples; When ye haue done all the things that are commaunded you, say, Wee be vnprofitable seruants: for we haue done nothing, but that which was our dutie to do.

The exami-
nation of
the merit of
works.
Luk. 17.10.

Moreouer, it is certain, that whatsoeuer good thing can be done of vs, is from God; who worketh in vs both the wil and the deed. *Phil. 2. 13.*

Therefore it was notably sayd of one of the auncient fathers; God rewardeth his owne good workes in vs, and not ours. *Paule* alio saith; What hast thou, that thou hast not receiued? and if thou haue receiued it, why dost thou boast, as though thou hadst not receiued it? Therefore among men indeede there may be merit or desert. For the husbandman after he hath digged all day in the vineyard, shall receiue his reward by desert. But with God, we can deserue nothing, but that he should punish vs for our offences.

1. Cor. 4. 7.

Theoph. The defenders of the opinion of merits, do object, that good works bee not meritorious of themselves, but in respect of the promise of God himselfe, wherein

The objecti-
on of the
defenders
of merits

he hath promised those things, which otherwise were not due.

The answer
to it.

Mat. They are not by this pretence acquitted of sacriledge or robbing God. For, they attribute that to themselves, which appertaineth to god alone. For, whē god made that promise vnto vs, he did it of his meere grace and fauoure, and therefore merite or desert is shut out. But I will make the whole matter plaine by a familiar example. If any king should promise his bond slaue an hundred thousand crownes, vpon condition that he diligently do a businesse committed to him, the bondslaue hauing done the commandement, may require the gold, yet not because he hath deserued it. But we that haue not fulfilled the cōdition enioyned vs, how much lesse haue we deserued the reward promised to our works?

Theoph. What letteth that we fulfill it not, when we obey the Lord from the hart?

Of the im-
perfection
of our
works.

Mat. The cause hath beene declared already before: namely for that there can bee no good thing done of vs that is not vncleane and defiled. For, as the most pure water, if it run through an vncleane conduit, is corrupted with the stinke of it: so the good works that God worketh in vs, be soiled and stained with the filthinesse of our flesh. Therefore euen as the promise of reward is altogether free, and without respect of any desert, so is the fulfilling of that promise.

Theoph. Why therefore doth God promise a reward to our works, which he may by right require of vs?

Mat. That, that promise may be as a spurre vnto vs, by the which we might be driuen forward, to the desire and doing of them: and that indeede not without cause: for we are by our nature very slacke vnto them.

Theoph. There is one thing behind, which I wil demand of thee; namely concerning that which was sayd of thee before, that the obedience which is vndertaken vpon hope of reward, is not acceptable vnto God.

Mat. This also is indeed true, if that affection raigne in vs as it doth in the vnfaithfull. Howbeit, it shall not hurt, so as the loue and feare of God go before, if we bee allured

allured and drawne on to his seruice, by the hope and looking for of the reward: And on the other side, be kept and held from disobeying him, by the feare of the punishmēt, that is, of eternall death.

Theoph. But ought not the loue of God to be sufficient, to bring forth that obedience in the harts of the faithful, without borrowing any other spur from elsewhere?

Mat. If our regeneration were perfect, as is the regeneration of them which liue blessedly in heauen, we should know God perfectly, whereby we should bee stirred vp to obey him perfectly. But because there is alwaies belunde in vs something not regenerated, which of it owne nature is in bondage, full of ignorance, without loue of God, it is necessarie, that wee should be stirred vp to that obedience by the hope of reward: and on the other side, by feare of punishments be held backe, and kept in obedience. Hereupon it is, that god both rewardeth our good works, in this life, according to his promises, and also correcteth our slacknesse and insolencie by diuerse afflictions which hee sendeth dayly: whereby it appeareth, that he is true, as wel in his promises, as in the executiō of his threatnings. But seeing you haue nothing more to propound, I would aduise, that we put off the rest of the disputation till another time, for I see that it is now almost noone.

Theoph. I haue heard your discourse of good works, as also the exposition of the moral Law, with so great delight, that the time of your speech hath seemed to me very short.

Mat. Indeed it is a most pleasant thing to intreat of good works, so as it be done holily, & by the rule of Gods word. Howbeit, that shall be little, except the practise bee adioyned, which verily getteth praise with men, comfort to the conscience, and profit with God. Therefore true and sound vertue is greatly commended, before vain prating, or the vnprofitable idle knowledge of it.

The vse of
the doctrine
of good
works,

Theoph. I do remember an excellent similitude, which I haue oftentimes heard of thee, and it is this. As a precious garment shut vp in a chest, is altogether vnprofitable; but if it be put on, it is an honor, delight, and profite vnto vs: so it is with good workes: for, the knowledge and vaine
discouraging

discourſing of them, is of no vſe, except they be put in practice.

Mat. It is moſt true. Therefore I pray God, our heavenly father, that as he hath imprinted his law in our minds, ſo he will ingraue it together with his loue and feare in our harts, by the power of his holy Spirit; that beeing alwaies cloathed with righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe wee may worſhip him with due reuerence and humility, all our life: that ſo

1. He may be glorified of vs,
2. Our neighbour edified,
3. And our faith & ſaluation confirmed, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord.

Theoph. So be it.

CHAP. II.

Of Prayer: which hath the chiefe place among good works, to teſtifie and confirme our faith.

Theophilus.



VR helpe is in the name of the Lord, which hath made both heauen and earth.

Mat. So be it.

Theoph. Concerning the doctrine of good works, I am ſufficiently ſatisfied (moſt dearly beloued brother): for I haue learned, that they onely be worthy the name of good workes, which God hath commanded in his Law: alſo, that they be not the cauſes of our iuſtification and ſaluation: neuertheleſſe, that they be profitable, both to the glory of God, and to the edification of our neighbours, and very much to the aſſurance of our ſaluation and faith.

Which is
the chiefe
good work.
A ſhort de-
ſcription of
true prayer.

Now I demand of you, which hath the firſt place among good works?

Mat. True prayer, namely that which is powred from the hart vnto God, with this confidence, that we ſhall be heard.

Theoph. Why givelt thou it the chiefe place among good works?

Mat. Becauſe by the helpe of it wee obtaine this, that
we

we be able to performe the other good works. Moreover, it yeeldeth vs the greatest testimony of our saluation. The excellencie of prayer.

Theoph. Whence is it, that it yeeldeth a fuller testimony of our faith, then the other good works?

Mat. From hence, namely because prayer with assured hope of being heard, cannot be made, vnlesse first wee be perswaded of the loue and fauour of God toward vs. For as *Paul* saith; How shall they call vpon him, in whome they haue not beleueed? For this cause the same Apostolic affirmeth out of the prophesie of *Ierl*; Whosoever shall call vpon the name of the Lord shall be saued. Rom. 10. 13; 14.

Theoph. But from whence haue we that assurance? Seeing we be guiltie vnto our selues of our owne vnworthinesse: by the which we deserue, that both wee our selues and our prayers should bee put backe from the seate of his Maiesty.

Mat. By the intercession or mediation of Iesus Christ, who (as it was shewed by vs in the Chapter of Faith) doth alwaies offer vp to God the Father the merit of his death, for full satisfaction of all our sinnes. Whereupon it cometh to passe, that he is made mercifull vnto vs, & such a one as will be intreated of vs, so as we shall receiue whatsoever we aske of him. And that doth the Scripture teache in these words; We haue an aduocate with the Father, Iesus Christ. 1 Iohn. 2. 1.

Theoph. It followeth therefore, that the office of the mediator, is by a most strait band ioyned with the office of the redeemer.

Mat. It is so; and therefore *Iohn*, after these wordes; we haue an aduocate with the Father Iesus Christ the righteous, presently addeth, and hee is the propitiation for our sinnes. Hereupon it is, that *Paule* ioyneth both the offices together, when he saith; There is one mediator of God and man, the man Christ Iesus, which gaue himselfe a ransom for all men. 1 Iohn. 2. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 5. 6.

The. Seeing therefore, one is our redeemer, euen Christ Iesus, it seemeth to follow, that he alone can also fulfil the office of the mediator for vs with the Father.

Mat. It followeth, and that indeed necessarily: and for this

The confu-
sion of the
error, about
prayer to
Saints.

this cause, in the places which we haue heard, we reade it written; One aduocate, one mediator: for the word *one*, is expressely added, to the end we might know, that besides him alone, there can be no other.

Theoph. Therefore they deale foolishly, and without any good ground, whoſoeuer ſecke other patrons and mediators besides Christ?

Mat. Very foolishly. For they forsake the Creator, to goe to the creature: the Lord, to goe to the seruant: the most dearchly beloued Sonne of the Father, which is in the highest authority and fauor with him, to pacify his wrath, to go to those, which lacke all things that be required to wash away sinnes, and therefore be vnable to make our prayers acceptable & offeree. Moreouer, they do esteem Christ, as he were not sufficient enough for the office of the mediator, and therefore deny him to be our true Saviour. For if he be fit and sufficient for so great an office, why do they chuse to themselves other mediators beside him? If they say they doubt not, but that he is both most powerful and most fit for this thing, but do doubt somewhat of his will; they do therein very much bewray themselves to be vnbeleeuers, which refuse to giue credite vnto him, after that he hath giuen vs so notable a pledge of his exceeding loue; namely, when he vouchsafed both to take vpon him our humane nature, & to suffer the death of the Crosse for our redemption. Adde hereunto, that most louingly he calleth vs vnto himselfe by his word, when he saith; Come vnto me all yee that labour & be laden, & I will cause you to haue ease, and yee shall find rest vnto your soules.

Mat. 11. 28
30.

Finally, whitherſoeuer they turne themselves, they shall neuer escape, but be found in iurious against Christ, forasmuch as they take from him the office of the mediator, purchased by his own blood, to giue it to blessed creatures that be in heaven.

Theoph. They object, that the office of Christ is not translated by them to the dead Saints, seeing they end all the prayers they make to God, with these words, Through Iesus Christ our Lord: Whereby they say is declared, that the chiefe honour is giuen to Christ himselfe.

Mat. It

Mat. It is a craft of Satan, by the which he would haue the wickednesse of praying to Saints to be hidden, and so the manifest wrong that they offer vnto Christ, which put quier his office vnto Saints, while they pray God, that by their merits and intercession, he wil grant the things that they desire, and at length adde, through Iesus Christ our Lord. Wherein they imitate and follow him, who after he hath giuen his Prince a blowe, would humbly doe him reuerence.

The confutation of it.

Theoph. Is it therefore vnlawfull for the faithfull being aliue, mutually among themselves, the one to commend the saluation of the other vnto God by prayer? seeing it cannot be, but some thing is taken away from the intercession of Christ.

Obiection.

Mat. Not so: for many causes may be alledged, for the which, the one is not only vnprofitable, but also forbidde, and therefore to be auoided: but the other not onely to be lawfull, but also profitable and necessarie.

The confutation of the obiection.

Theoph. Declare those causes.

Mat. I will make foure chiefe.

1. Because loue, that is so much commended vnto vs, is both cherished & increased by praying one for another. But this can haue no place in the dead, of whome *Salomon* speaking saith, Both their loue, and their hatred and their enuie is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the sunne.

Ecclesiastes 9.6.

2. Because, praying one for another, we thinke not to be heard for his sake that prayeth for vs: which they doe that pray to the Saints departed, and by that meanes giue vnto them the office of Christ.

Theoph. But it may be, that the same thing may befall them, which desire to bee holpen with the prayers of the godly that be aliue: for why may not some thinke, that they shall be heard for their holinesse and good workes sake?

Mat. I grant, it is not impossible, that some should affect that manner abuse the prayers of the godly: but there is the least danger in this behalfe, if it bee compared with the other. For, it cannot be in any but the ignorant and vnskill-

vnskilful, for whose ignorance we ought not to refuse that so holy an ordinance of God. But the intercession of departed Saints doth bring with it most manifest dāger: for, no man can pray vnto the, but he thinketh for their takes to obtain the things which he desireth of God. The prooffe whereof are all the formes of prayers written by such as worshipped them.

Theoph. Go forward, alledge the third cause.

3.

Mat. The faithfull, that be aliue, may know the necessities one of another, and pray to God for them: which the faithfull departed cannot. I am not ignorant what they be wont to obiekt, namely that the Saints departed do, in God, as it were in a glasse, see all the things that be done in this world: but that is altogether to diuine or guesse, without any testimony of Scripture.

Theo. Declare the fourth cause.

4.

Mat. That is the chiefe: namely, because the prayers of the godly being aliue, one for another, are grounded vpon the testimony of the word of God, also vpon examples & promises, by the which it is confirmed, that they shall not be in vaine; but the prayers of the dead are neither grounded vpon any testimony of Gods word, neither vpon promises nor examples.

Theoph. Saie you so?

Mat. I say it: and therefore it is not done of faith; for the word of God is the only foundation of it. Wherefore

Rom. 14. 23

Paule affirmeth; that whatsoeuer is not of faith is sin. And this reason is sufficient to ouerthrow the intercession of Saints departed. For who can endure this, that mā should lift vp himselfe aboue God?

Theo. I do now confesse, that all prayers which are made to Saints departed, for this end that they should be our intercessours and mediators to God, are to be cast out & hissed at: and that Christ alone, whose office this is, is sufficient.

Why Christ
only suffi-
ceth the
faithfull to
do the office
of the me-
diator with
the father.

Mat. Yea truly, it is extream madnesse for any to seeke to himselfe another mediator: forasmuch as he can doe it most perfectly, because he lacketh none of the thinges that suffice to pacifie God, and to cause him to be mer-
full

full vnto vs. Moreouer he loueth vs most dearly, and therefore is touched with pittie vpon our infirmities. He knoweth our prayers, presently when they be conceiued. He commandeth that we should come vnto him, as often as wee will craue any thing at the hands of God.

Finally, he assureth vs, that we shal obtaine al the things which we shall aske in his name, when he saith, Verily, verily, I say vnto you, whatsoeuer ye shall aske of the Father in my name he will giue it ye. Hitherto haue ye asked nothing in my name: aske & you shal receiue. And in another place he saith: whatsoeuer you shall aske in my name, I will do it. Iohn. 16. 23
Iohn. 14. 13

Theoph. What meane these words, To aske any thing in the name of Christ?

Mat. It is to beseech God, to heare our prayers, not indeed hauing respect to our vnworthinesse, but to the merit that is continually offered to him of Christ Iesus for vs. Therefore to aske any thing of God in the name of Christ, is answerable to his intercession with the Father for vs, & that more is, an approbation or allowance of it, & the way to be partakers of it.

Theoph. But ought the promise of Christ, wherein he assureth vs, that we shall receiue whatsoeuer we aske in his name, to be extended to al things that shal come into our minds, without putting any exception?

Mat. Not so: For our desires for the most part be euill: which if they were fulfilled, would be to our destruction rather then to our profit. Therefore Christ vnderstandeth onely those things which concerne the glorie of God and our commodity and saluation: all which things indeed he hath in few words comprehended in that forme of prayer, which he hath giuen vs; namely, Our Father which art in heauen, &c.

Theoph. Must we therefore vse no other forme of praier?

Mat. If you respect the matter or substance, wee may vse no other: but it is in our libertie to enlarge it: whereof the holy scripture yeildeth vs many exāples, in those forms of prayer which it setteth before vs; namely, the Psalmes: all which yndoubtedly be referred to this form appointed by Christ.

*Concerning good workes,
The exposition of the Lords prayer.*

Theo. Let vs examine the forme of prayer that Christ hath deliuered: how many parts be there of it?

*The summe
and parts of
the Lords
prayer.*

Mat. In the beginning it containeth a Preface, and afterward sixe petitions. The first three whereof do immediately respect the glory of God. But the later three contain those things that appertain to our selues, both for the helpe of this life, and for euerlasting saluation. And they be therefore placed after those that concerne the glorie of God, to the end we might vnderstand, that the later three be not rightly conceiued and made, vnlesse they be referred to the glory of God, as it were vnto their proper end, and that therefore they shall not be heard, according to the saying of the Apostle; You aske and receiue not, because you aske amisse, that you might consume it vpon your lusts.

James. 4. 3.

The preface of the Lords prayer.

Our Father which art in heauen.

Theo. Let vs consider of the Preface of the Lords prayer.

Mat. It is contained in these words: Our Father which art in heauen.

Theoph. Who is that Father, vnto whom Christ biddeth vs to fly?

Mat. It is the first person of the holy Trinity, namely, the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ.

Theoph. Is therefore one onely person of the Trinity to be praised vnto?

Mat. We must know, that in true prayer we are onely the instrumēt of God, who alone in that as in other good workes, worketh the things that concerne our saluation. But that is to be vnderstood of all the persons according to the distinct propriety of euery of them. For the holy Ghost prayeth in vs, as appeareth by the saying of the Apostle; The Spirit maketh request for the Saints according to the will of God. The Sonne offereth our prayer to the Father. This prayer the Father receiueh, and louingly heareth. Therefore lawfull and true prayer is that

Rom. 8. 27.

that which is made from the hart, the holy Ghost stirreth vs vp, which also is directed to the Father in the name of Iesus Christ his Son. Indeed we haue an example in the holy Scriptures of a certain prayer made to the Son, in the which this distinction of the persons is not obserued: namely in that which *Steuen* made while he was stoned; Lord Iesus receiue my spirit. Howbeit this example, & if *Alt. 7. 59.* there be any such other, is not contrary to the rule of right praying. But because we haue begun the exposition of the Lords prayer, we are to returne to the issue of the speech we haue in hand: and it is this, that in this place wee bee taught that our prayers must be directed to the father: which *Paule* testifieth that himselfe did, in these words; I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ. We may also pray vnto Christ, not onely as he is God, but also *Ephes. 3. 14* as he is the Mediatour, that is, as he is one person consisting of two natures: yet so, as the Deity be the object or the thing which wee set before our eyes in praying. Likewise also we may pray to the holy Ghost, distinguished from the other persons, who with the Father and the Son is very God. And indeed the godly that exercise themselves in such prayers, do a thing profitable and worthie to be done, so as they be not distracted with the deepe meditation of the distinction of the three persons, but alwaies haue their minds fixed & settled vpon the vnitie of the essence. This also is to be obserued, that the name of God, & of father, is not seldom in the Scripture referred to each of the persons. And let these things be spoken by the way. For it is not my purpose at this time, to declare all things particularly that appertaine vnto this place.

Theoph. But why doth Christ command vs, that comming to his Father, we should call him by the name of our Father?

Mzt. Not onely that we should gather, seeing he is the father of Christ, that he is also our father: but especially for three causes.

1. First, that wee may call vpon him with true faith, that is, that we may belecue that he which is our father, will not deny vs the things which wee shall aske of him

Mat. 7. 9.
30. 11.

according to that saying of Christ, What man is there of you, who if his sonne shal aske bread of him, will giue him a stone? and if he shall aske fish, will giue him, a serpent?

2. Another cause is, that we might vnderstand (which hath bene already said of vs) that we ought not to drawe neere vnto God, but in the name of his naturall son Iesus Christ. For in him alone we are adopted and made his children.

3. The third, when we are commāded to call him our father in common, rather then particularly and properly, my father, we be taught that true charity & brotherly loue towards our neighbours is required of vs in prayer: forasmuch as we be all the children of the same father, & heires of one and the selfe same inheritance. Whosoever therfore make not their prayers to god in the name of Iesus Christ, or do carry priuie hatred or enmity against their brethre, cannot pray to God with this forme of prayer.

Theo. Why hath Christ added these words; Which art in heauen?

Mat. Not to signifie that his Maiestie is shut vp within heauen: which indeede (seeing it is infinite) the whole world is not able to containe: But

1. That he may be distinguished from our earthly fathers, and that withall we might vnderstand how much better he is then they, and more able to helpe vs. Therefore Christ said to his Disciples; If ye the refore which are euil, can giue good gifts to your children, how much more will your father that is in heauen giue good thinges to them that aske them of him?

Mat. 7. 11.

2. Secondly, those words are added, that comming to God, we should lift vp our minds aboue all earthly & transitory things, how beautifull or goodly fouer.

3. Finally, that we might earnestly & in deed acknowledged the incomprehensible greatnesse, the maruellous wisdom, and infinite power of him, whom we pray vnto: which verily do farre more clearly shine in the heauens, then in the earth, to the end we might worship him with the more reuerence, and rest vpon him with greater trust and assurance.

The first Petition;

Hallowed be thy name.

Theoph. Let vs come to the three petitions that respect the glory of God. Which is the first of them?

Mat. It is contained in these words; Hallowed bee thy name.

Theo. What is the meaning of it?

Mat. We desire of God, that the knowledge of him may be spread abroad throughout the whole world, that so his name may be sanctified, that is, that all men may giue him his due honour. The exposition of the first petition.

Theoph. Wherefore makest thou mention of the knowledge of God: which Christ mentioneth not in this petition.

Mat. Because God cannot be truly hallowed & worshipped, except the knowledge of him go before. For wee cannot worship nor praise him, of whom we be ignorant, & whose excellency & power is vnknowne to vs. Hence is that saying of y^e Prophet; According to thy name (ô God) so is thy praise vnto the worlds end. Psal. 43. 10

Theoph. Is not this hallowing of the name of God, the same with that whereof thou spakest in the exposition of the third commandment?

Mat. The very same; and therefore the exposition of that cōmandement, may be in stead of an exposition to this petition, and shew how the name of God is to be hallowed.

The second Petition;

Thy kingdome come.

Theoph. Let vs passe ouer to the second petition.

Mat. It is this; Thy kingdome come. Now in it we desire of God, that by the knowledge of his Maiesty being giuen vnto men, he will cause all to be gathered into the Church. For in it he raigneth by the scepter of his word, and by the power of his spirit. The exposition of the second petition.

Theo. That I may the more easily come to the true meaning of this petition, I do first demand of thee where-

fore that rule and dominion, which God exerciseth ouer his Church, is called his kingdome: after I will aske thee, concerning the word, *Come*.

Of the king-
dome of
God.

Mat. That rule is called by the name of kingdome, for the likenesse it hath with earthly kingdomes.

Theoph. Wherein standeth that likenesse?

Mat. In foure heades or principall points, namely because in the Church there be

1. One king.
2. Subiects.
3. Lawes.

4. *Gouernors*: who, as in earthly kingdomes, haue the charge to see to the keeping of those lawes. For, in the Church there is one king, namely Iesus Christ, who by his Father is appointed Lord ouer it, to rule and gouerne it; which is confirmed by the words of the Angell to *Marie*; The Lord God will giue vnto him the seate of his father *Dauid*, and he shal raigne ouer the house of *Iacob* for euer, and there shall be no end of his kingdome. Therefore the kingdome of God and the kingdome of Christ, is one and the selfe same. The faithfull be the people of this kingdome, whom Christ hath redeemed with his death, and set free from the tyranny of the diuel, that he might deliuer them vp to his owne kingdome, to become his subiects. The lawes of it are the word of God, wherein, all things bee commanded and declared, that appertaine either to the humble seruice and obedience of that king, or to the concord of the Citizens & subiects. The officers which are specially occupied about this kingdome, are the ministers of the word, or pastors: vpon whome this charge is laide, that they preach the word, and see to the keeping of those lawes. Who also (as the Apostle speaketh) haue in readines

2. Cor. 10. 6. reuenge against all disobedience.

Theoph. I haue heard of the likenesse between the kingdome of God & the kingdome of men: now I desire to vnderstand wherein they differ.

Mat. 1. First, all things in the kingdome of God are spirituall: namely, the King himselfe, his glory, power, subiects, lawes, reuwards, punishments of the rebels. Therefore Christ

Christ said vnto Pilate; My kingdome is not of this world. *Ioh. 18. 36.*

2. Secondly, Christ requireth no such thing of his subiects, as earthly kings are wont to aske: but contrariwise doth continually enrich them with his owne giftes and spirituall riches.

3. Thirdly, he maketh them all partakers of his kingly dignity, which earthly kings cannot do.

4. Fourthly, he doth not onely commaund, as other kings do, but giueth vs his own spirit, which putteth power into vs, whereby we are made able to yeeld our humble and dutifull obedience vnto his comandements.

Finally, all other kingdomes bee subiect vnto alteration and change, but this kingdome is inuincible and shall indure vntill the last comming of Christ.

Such is the kingdome of God and of Christ, which indeed (as hath bene said) is not to be referd but to that rule which he exerciseth ouer his beloued children, and those that be receiued into the Church.

Theoph. Who therefore hath the rule ouer the vnbeleeuers and wicked?

Mat. The diuell: and for that cause, he is called the Prince of this world; yet notwithstanding, the Lord hath the chief rule & power, both ouer the vnbeleeuers, & ouer their Captain, which by his iust iudgement hath made the subiects to that vnbeleeuing tyrant; to the ende they may be vexed and tormeted of him according to their deserts, forasmuch as they haue refused to obey Christ, who is a most louing & mercifull King. Moreouer, that kingdome of Sathan hath immortall hatred against the kingdome of Christ; the head (I say) of that kingdome, namely Sathan and his souldiers, whome he stirreth vp to make outward warre against the kingdome of Christ, while hee in the meane time assauleth it within. For, both of them labour and strue with all their might, to spoile & sacke that kingdome of Christ. But they do it in vaine: for, how much the more furiously they seek to ouerthrowe it, so much the more doe they helpe it forward: and at length pull vpon themselues vtter ruine & destruction.

Theoph. We haue bene long enough in the exposition

of the kingdome of God: let vs goe forward to the other member. What meaneth that word; Let it come, or let it approach?

How the
kingdome
of God com
meth.

Mat. The office of a good king standeth in two speciall things.

1. First, to rule his subiects (that is to say, such as are loyall and obedient) to keep them in peace, defend, deale mercifully and louingly with them, & to redeeme them if they be taken captiues.

2. Secondly, to punish the rebels, and to destroy and throw downe the enemies of his kingdome. When therefore we desire of God that his kingdome may come, wee do as if we prayed, that he would increase the number of beleeuers, enlarge his Church euery day, more and more heape vpon it his gifts, and settle it with right order: and contrariwise, that he would cut off all the enemies of it, ouerthrow their counsels, destroy their purposes, and that the defending of the Church may be euery day increased, till at length it come to the highest perfection. Howbeit that shall not be before the day of iudgement: at which time all his enemies being overcome, he shall make them his footestool. And then (as the Apostle saith) he shall deliuer vp the kingdome to God the Father, that is, he shall raigne quietly without any rebellion and resistance, & we shall liue peaceably in him, being deliuered from all feare and trouble of enemies.

1. Cor. 15.
24.

The third Petition;

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heauen.

Theoph. Let vs come to the third petition, being the last of them that respect the glory of God.

Mat. It is this; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen. Wherein indeed we do not simply desire of God, that his will may be done, the fulfilling whereof there is verilie nothing that can let: but that he will so guide vs with his spirit, that we may be ready to do his will, reuealed vnto vs in his word, and that with no lesse desire then the heauely Angels do. But concerning his secret will, we desire that if when it be done, any aduersities befall vs, namely losse of good;

goods, hinderance, afflictions, whether they concerne the soule or the body, we may beare them all patiently as sent from his hand, and so obey his will, that ours may whollie and altogether giue place vnto it.

Theoph. Indeed he were happie, that after this manner should conforme himselfe to the wil of God.

Mat. Yea surely, because he might worthily glory in this, that God did nothing but that which he would, seeing that he would no other thing but that which were acceptable & pleasing to God. And assuredlie there be many things that call vs vnto that. For, if God our heavenly father be wiser then we (which all men do confesse) it is not to bee doubted, but hee knoweth what we haue neede of, better then our selues; and that therefore by good right we ought to preferre his holy and good will before our owne, which is wicked and corrupt: yea rather often like vnto children, we know not what we would haue. For many times wee change our purposes, and forthwith or a little after, wee disallow that, which a little before wee very greatly allowed of. For this cause the Lord, without any respect of our will and intents, as a good father, lendeth those things; which hee knoweth to bee necessary, both for his owne glorie, and for our profite and saluation: which indeede Of Christall
are to bee receiued with a quiet and thankfull minde as patience,
from his hand, vnlesse we meane to be miserable for euer: which we shall neuer escape, so long as we cleaue to our owne will.

Theoph. I haue long since laboured to performe this, but as yet I haue not attained it: but especially I finde by experience, that the vse of this doctrine is most hard when any great trouble commeth, whether it be of bodie or minde.

Mat. It is not onely hard, but verily cannot be generally brought to practise, especially if respect bee had of our owne flesh, which maruellously pleaseth it self in the owne will and affections, and seeketh for nothing else but delights and pleasures. For this cause, in this place Christ teacheth vs to desire it of his father: but *Iames* assureth, that we shall receiue it, so as wee aske it in faith; If any

James. 1. 5.

of you lacke wisdom, let him aske it of God, which giueth it liberally vnto all, and casteth no man in the teeth, and it shall be giuen vnto him. But let him aske in faith, not doubting.

Theoph. In that place *James* speaketh of wisdom, but we speake of patience.

Mat. There is no doubt, but by the word wisdom, he vnderstandeth patience, wherunto he had exhorted the faithfull in the former verse, in these words; Let patience haue the perfect worke, that you may be perfect and entire, so as nothing be wanting.

But because we cannot do it of our selues, here he sheweth by what meanes we may haue it from God, when hee saith; if any man lacke wisdom, let him aske it of God, which giueth it to all men liberally.

Theoph. But what is the cause, that he calleth patience by the name of wisdom?

Mat. To the end wee might vnderstand, that a mans chiefe wisdom standeth herein, that in his aduersities and troubles hee patiently submit himselfe to the will of God: but on the contrary side, that it is the extremest foolishnesse and madnesse, if any dare resist and set himselfe against it. For what good doth he by it? Can hee change the will of God? No verily. Nay rather he maketh his own case worse, as well with inward griefe that tormenteth him, as also because he pulleth the wrath of God vpon himselfe. For by our stubbornnesse hee is compelled to lay more greuous punishments vpon vs. On the other side, by our patience hee is moued vnto pitie, so as he turneth our afflictions into kindnesse, and doing vs good: euen as good parentes are wont, when they perceiue that their children bee brought into good order by their corrections.

Theoph. I see it is a thing profitable and necessary: howbeit, I thinke that the meditation of the things which thou declaredst (when we spake of afflictions) doe make not a little for this purpose.

Mat. Thou iudget rightly. For in that place we deuised many things which may worke exceeding great
comfort,

comforte in the heartes of the faithfull. Neuerthelesse, I will adde vnto them two other besides, as an ouerplus.

1. First, when we bee ouerladen with afflictions, the euils which we suffer are not so much to bee considered, as those which wee haue deserued, and yet notwithstanding, be not laid vpon vs. Furthermore, we must thinke vpon the good things which the Lord heapeth vpon vs, on the other side: and so ineeede wee shall finde, that God dealeth most mercifully euen in the midst of our afflictions, if they be examined according to the greatnesse of our finnes.

2. Secondly, that wee are not to looke vpon them onely, who in outward shew be a little happier then wee, and whome we see to bee exempted from the troubles wherewith we are grieued; but vpon infinite and innumerable others, which are in farre greater miseries, then are those that we suffer, whose finnes notwithstanding are not so great as ours.

Theoph. I do very much reioyce that I haue heard these two things: for I will dayly make vse of them, as occasion shall serue.

Mat. Thou speakest wisely, when thou addest the word, dayly. For the Lord our master, that we should not forget this doctrine so profitable, is wont oftentimes to beate it into our heads, by sending of troubles, wherein we might practise it. And verily we ought to be wel acquainted with it, seeing we are so often exercised in it.

Theoph. But I for my part doe find it true by dayly experience, that I am very little exercised in it. Neuerthelesse I hope, that by the grace of God, I shall profit better in it then heretofore I haue done: especiallie, seeing now I know the way, how I may doe it, namely to craue it of God by dayly prayers, and continually to haue in minde the things which thou hast sayd. But now forasmuch as I haue heard the meaning of this third petitiō, which is the last of those that concerne the glory of God, let vs go forward to the rest. But before I come to the three following which concerne our owne good and saluation, I would haue

haue thee to declare the order of these petitions, and withal how fitly they be ioyned together.

The coherence & sum of the three former petitions of the Lords prayer

Mat. These former agree together most excellently, forasmuch as they be of the same kind. For, after that we are made partakers of the knowledge of God, by the which we are moued to enter into his kingdome, that is, into his Church, it is meete and conuenient, that we should desire to be informed and taught the obedience of his will, whereunto the ministry of the Church calleth vs dayly.

Finally, in these three petitions, we desire of God, to giue men such knowledge of his Maiesty, as they may willingly submit themselues to his kingdome and rule, and from their harts obey his pleasure; that so he may be glorified of them, and in them.

The fourth Petition;

Giue vs this day our dayly bread.

The summe of the last three petitions.

Theoph. We are to come to the three last petitions of the Lords prayer, wherein we said those things were contained which concerne both our soule and body.

Mat. True: For, the first of them comprehendeth the things that be necessary to the passing through or finishing of this life: but the other two, those that appertain to our saluation.

Theoph. Recite therefore the first.

Mat. Giue vs this day our dayly bread.

Theoph. What is the meaning of it?

The exposition of the fourth petition.

Mat. To the end we may serue God according to our calling, in this petition we desire of him, to giue vs our dayly bread, that is, that euerie day he would minister vnto vs those things that be necessarie for this life: for all those bee comprehended vnder the name of bread, as being a thing most necessary. Howbeit, this is to be noted, that (while we aske of God our dayly bread) we doe also desire such things as be requisite and necessary, that wee may eate it in peace and quietnesse.

Therefore this petition generallie containeth whatsoever can be desired for our peaceable, calm, vndistressed, and good estate in this world. Neuerthelesse, wee ought

ought to depend and hang vpon the pleasure of our heavenly father. For he will giue vs such things, as hee shall knowe to be for the furtherance of his own glory, and our saluation. And hereupon it may bee gathered, why he would haue vs to aske bread onely; namelie that we might know, that breade ought to suffice vs, if the Lord shall see it good, to giue vs no other thing to nourish vs.

Theoph. There do fīue principall points come into my mind, concerning this thy exposition of daily bread, whereof I will aske thee.

The first whereof is this, why wee pray to haue daylie bread giuen vs: seeing wee are commanded to prouide vs, by our honest labour, such things as be necessary for this life.

1.

Mat. Because our labour shall be to no purpose, except the blessing of God be added vnto it; euen as the Psalmist expressly teacheth.

Theoph. Wherefore are we commaunded to craue that bread, which we call *our*?

Mat. The word *our* was added, for two causes. The first, that we might vnderstand, that that bread is promised of God; and therefore, by good right, called ours: and hereby we might be assured, that it cannot be denied vs. The other, to the end we might remember, that that bread is to be prouided by lawfull means and wayes, & such as be allowed of God; but not by theft or deceit. For otherwise we eate not our own bread, but another mans; receiued not from God, but from the Diuell.

2.

Theoph. The third point followeth: why are these words added; This day, & dayly?

3.

Mat. That we might altogether, and wholly depend vpon the prouidence of God, so as we should not bee carefull for things to come, as if we did distrust; but bee content with those that be necessary for our present need, with this hope, that the Lord will prouide for the morrow.

Theoph. I come to the fourth point: How well agreeth it, that they which haue plenty of things, and whose barnes and store houses be full, should aske their dayly bread?

4.

Mat.

Mat. Because we must hold it for a certainty and truth, that bread of it selfe cannot nourish, except the blessing of God be added. For sometime rich men are scene worne & pined away with leannesse For this cause Moses saith; Man liueth not by bread onely, but by euery word that cometh out of the mouth of god. In which words, the Prophet doth also signify this, that the power of God doth not so cleaue vnto bread, that he cannot nourish vs without it, as ofe as shall please him. Whereof he gaue the Israelites a singular prooffe, whom he fed in the wildernesse by the space of forty years, without bread.

Theoph. The last point is behind. Why doth Christ command vs to pray for bread in common, in these wordes; Giue vs our bread, rather then priuately, after this maner; Giue me my bread?

Mat. To the end we might knowe, that we are to pray for it, not for our selues alone, but also for our neighbours, of whose profit and commoditie, Christian charity requireth, that we should be no lesse carefull then of our owne. Moreouer, by this manner of praying, wee are more and more assured, that wee shall obtaine the breade which we pray for; forasmuch as the whole Church doth not onely craue it with vs, but also for vs; euen as we also do craue the same both with it and for it. For we are all the sonnes of one and the same father, euen as we are taught in the beginning of this prayer, while wee say in common; Our Father. For the same cause also, the two petitions following be deliuered in the same forme of words: namely; Forgiue vs our trespasses, and leade vs not into tentation. And they containe all the things that appertaine to the heavenly life, euen as this containeth those which bee necessarie for this present life.

Theoph. Wherefore are the things that concerne our saluation contained in two petitions?

Mat. Because our saluation standeth vpon two partes. The first, that we be reconciled vnto God; and this wee desire in the first petition, which intreateth of the forgiveness of our finnes. The other, that being reconciled vnto him by the forgiveness of finnes, we be kept in his loue and
obedience,

obedience, so as vve obey him, being mindfull of that infinite benefit vvhich he hath bestowed vpon vs.

The fifth petition.

Forgiue vs our trespasses, as vve forgiue them that trespass against vs.

Theoph. The two last petitions do remaine to be considered of vs. Let vs therefore come to the first.

What is the meaning of it?

Mat. because vve be all miserable sinners, by reason vvhich the Lord is iustly angrie vwith vs, yea rather is so long angrie, as our sinnes shall be imputed & laid to our charge before him, in this petition vve pray, that for his infinite mercies sake he vwill forgiue them all; to the end that for the time to come he may fauour vs, being at one vwith vs, namely by the forgiuenesse of our sinnes.

Theoph. But vwhy do vve craue of God to forgiue vs our sins: for the vvhich Christ hath most fully satisfied: seeing there is no place for forgiuenesse, vwhere satisfaction is made.

Mat. If the satisfaction vvere of our selues, this vver indeed true: but seeing it is by Christ, vvhich is freely giuen vs of his father, forgiuenesse agreeth necessarily vwith it. And verily it is as a man condemned in some sum of money vvere to be cast into prison, vntill he had paid the whole summe, and yet vvere not able to doe it. Whom if the Prince meant to pleasure vwithout any hinderance of the law, & should freely giue him that wherein he was to haue bene fined, should he not haue done as much, as if he had forgiuen the offence? He should indeed. And this similitude is most fit: Forasmuch as in this petition our sins be called debts, to the end we might vnderstand, that by the we are no lesse debtors vnto God, then if a man were in great debt vnto another, and yet had not whereof to pay any thing at all. With this similitude agreeth also that, that is written of *Paul*, Putting out the hand-writing that was against vs, which was contrary vnto vs, he euen tooke it away, and fastned it vpon the crosse. In which words he teacheth, that Christ hath most fully satisfied for our sinnes,

Col. 2. 14.

Theoph.

Theo. The more diligently I consider the myſterie of our redemption, ſo much the more commeth to my remembrance the infinite maruellous wiſdome of God, which by a way altogether wonderfull, hath knit or ioyned together his perfect iuſtice with his perfect mercy, & that aſwell to his owne glory, as to our ſaluation and benefite.

Mat. True indeed. But if thou do with a little more diligence marke that way, thou ſhalt find three things vvhich the reaſon of man could neuer haue deuised, & vvhich out of Chriſt are found no vvhere elſe, for the auoiding of the puniſhment due for our finnes: and they be theſe: That vve ſhould our ſelues pay our debts vnto God: or elſe ſeek another, vvhich is both able to pay the, and doe alſo acquite vs of them: or that God himſelfe ſhould forgiue vs vvhatſoeuer vve be indebted vnto him.

Theoph. I would haue you declare theſe things a little more largely.

Mat. Firſt therefore I will ſhevv, that theſe three cannot any vvhere be ſoud, ſauing in Chriſt. And verily vvhatſoeuer men can imagine, they ſhall neuer finde in themſelues vvher vvith to ſatiſſie God. Who alſo (as the Apoſtle ſaith) hath ſhut all vnder ſinne, that he might haue mercie vpon all.

Rom. 11. 32

Neither ſhall they finde any creature in heauen or in earth ſufficient to do this office. But if they fly vnto God his mercy, to obtaine forgiueneſſe of their finnes, his perfect iuſtice vvill be a let, vvhich requireth to bee fully ſatiſſied.

Theoph. Let vs nowv ſee, howv God hath ioyned theſe three things together in Chriſt, to reconcile his exceeding great mercy vvith his moſt perfect righteouſneſſe, vnto our ſaluation.

Mat. Being made one vvith Chriſt by faith, and therefore alſo partakers of that vvhich is his, vve our ſelues pay all our debts vnto god, & that out of the riches of Chriſt, vvhich are truly made ours. And by this means the perfect iuſtice of god is fully ſatiſſied, vvhich indeed requireth this, that he which oweth the debt ſhould pay it. Neuertheleſſe another hath paid it for vs, namely Chriſt, vvho alone hath

hath drunk of the cup of his wrath, & as the Apostle saith) **1. Pet. 2, 24**
hath born our sinnes in his body vpon the tree. And ther-
in most manifestly appeareth the great mercy of god, that
gaue his most dearly beloued sonne for vs his enemies
vnto a most shamefull death.

Finally, because he that hath satisfied the heauenly fa-
ther for vs, is his dearly beloued Son, & euerlasting God
with the Father, freely giuen vnto vs; the continuall for-
giuenesse of sinnes (as hath bene said) is ioyned with his
satisfaction, and that doth especially make stedfast & sure
his immeasurable mercy.

Theoph. Verily a notable discourse, and very full of con-
fort. Let vs now returne to the exposition of our petition:
Why is this clause added in the end: As we forgieue them
that trespass against vs?

Mat. That is, according to the promise made vs of the
forgiuenesse of our sinnes, vpon this condition, that wee
forgiue them that hurt vs. And Christ would haue it ex-
pressly mentioned, because he knew how hardly we forgiue
others their trespasses. Therefore in this clause he calleth
vs to remember that we shall not obtaine forgiuenesse of
our sinnes at the hands of God, except we also forgiue our
neighbours their offences. Hereupon is that threatening of
God by the Prophet against the Israelites; When you shall
stretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: al-
though you make many prayers I will not heare you; for
your hands are full of blood. **Esa. 1, 15.**

Toeoph. Therefore this manner of speech doth not note
an equality: as if God forgauē vs so much only as we shall
forgiue.

Mat. No not so. For, our forgiuenesse euen as we our
selues be imperfect, is alwaies imperfect, and fauoureth of
the vncleanness of our flesh: whereupon it commeth to
passe, that euen in them that are most regenerated, not-
withstanding they do vnfaignedly forgiue as God requi-
reth, and desire no reuenge, yea rather be ready to doe
good vnto such as haue hurt them, and do daily pray for
them: yet there remaineth some bitterneesse, so as we doe
not embrace them with that affection of heart, which we
would

would haue embraced them with, if we had alwaies beene well pleased with them: which if God should doe, we were in very ill case.

Therefore this is the meaning of this petition; O Lord according to thy promise forgiue vs our sinnes fully and perfectly, as a most perfect God: seeing that we being most imperfect men, according to thy commandement haue forgiuen them that haue hurt vs.

Theoph. In what place are this commandement and promise?

Mat. They be presently added by Christ after this praier in these words; if you forgiue men their offences, your heavenly father will also forgiue you: But if you shall not forgiue men their offences, neither will your father forgiue you your offences.

Mat. 6. 14.

Theoph. I graunt it is very right, that we should do those things to our neighbours, which we desire to be done to our selues; and so that God doth most worthily deny the forgiuenesse, that will not forgiue their neighbours.

Mat. True: especially seeing our sinnes against God, whereof we craue pardon, are farre more grieuous, and farre more in number then are they which our neighbors can euer commit against vs. And this doth Christ plaine-ly teach in an excellent parable, when hee saith: The kingdome of heauen is like vnto a king, which would demand an account of his seruants. And when he began to reckon, there was one brought vnto him which ought ten thousand talents. And when he was not able to pay it, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all he had, and the debt to be paid. The seruant therefore fell downe and besought him, saying; Master, appease thine anger toward me, and I will pay thee all. Then that seruants maister had compassion vpon him, and loosed him, and forgane him the debt: but when the seru-
Mat. 18. 23.

uant was departed, he found one of his fellowes that ought him an hundred pence, and he layd handes vpon him, and tooke him by the throte, saying; Pay me that thou owest. Then his fellow fell downe at his feete, and besought him saying, Appease thine anger towardes me, &c

I will pay thee all: yea he would not, but went & cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. And when his other fellowes saw what was done, they were very sorry, & came and declared vnto their maister al that was done. Then his maister called him, and said vnto him; O euill seruant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou prayedst me: oughtest thou not also to haue had pittie vpon thy fellow, euen as I had pittie on thee? So his maister was wroth, and deliuered him vnto the paylers, till he should pay all that was due vnto him. So likewise (saith Christ) shall mine heauenly Father do vnto you, except ye forgive from your hearts each one to his brother their trespasses.

The sixth petition;

And leade vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill.

Theoph. The last petition is behinde.

Mat. Having obtained forgiveness of sinnes, we desire of the Lord to be present with vs, that we fall not againe into them, when we say, Lead vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill. For, this we pray that hee will not giue vs ouer vnto the power of the diuell, to be overcome of him in temptation, as we haue deserued; but contrariwise, that he would strengthen vs against the assaults and deadly subtilties of so great an enemy, that so daily more and more we may endeavour to amend our liues and obey him.

The exposition of the last petition.

Theoph. When therefore God leade men into temptation, doth he not stirre them vp to euill?

Mat. Not so. For that is altogether vnworthy of his Maiestie, and is contrary to his diuine nature.

For this cause *Iames* saith; Let no man when he is tempted, say he is tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with euill, neither doth he tempt any man. But every one is tempted, while he is drawne aside & inared of his owne concupiscence.

Iames 1.13.

Therefore as God in mercy defendeth the faithfull and suffereth them not to be deceiued or mastered of the diuell so as to be overcome of sinne: so on the contrarie

side, such as he meaneth to punish, hee deliuereth ouer to the diuel as to a tormentor, to be ouercome and vanquished of him in temptation. In which sense the Apostle saith, that they which glorifie not God, are giuen vp to the lustes of their owne harts. Which neuerthelesse he doth without any allowance of sinne, as hath bene said in this place.

Rom. I. 24.

Theoph. So far as I see, God punisheth sinnes with sins.

Mat. Yea verily: but by a way diuerse from that whereof I spake when we entreated of afflictions: in which place we said, that God sometimes stirreth vp one, who committeth that sinne againt vs, which we our selues had committed against another: an example whereof we haue in *Dauid*. He had defiled the wife of *Kriab*: the Lord raised vp his sone *Absolon*, to defile his fathers concubines. But of all the temptations which are sent of God, that is the most gricuous, when God deliuereth men vp to the diuell to be ouercome of him in temptation. For then he giueth them over into a reprobate sense, that when they haue heaped sinnes vpon sinnes, they may at length run headlong into eternall destruction, excepte the Lord. (which sometimes he doth) by his mightie hand stay the course of that downefall.

Theoph. What meaneth the conclusion added to this prayer? For thine is the kingdome, the power and glory, for euer and euer, Amen.

Mat. It containeth the cause for the which we craue all the former things, namely for that they concerne his kingdome, power, and glory. For, by the first three, his kingdome is made manifest, and by the last three his power is exercised; whereupon followeth the increase of his glorie. Therefore this conclusion is added, that we may with more boldnesse come vnto God, and craue of him the things we haue spoken of, who onely is able to giue them to vs: and that with greater assurance we might belecue that we shall obtaine them; forasmuch as while he bestoweth them vpon vs, he declareth himselfe to be a most mightie king, whereupon ensueth his owne glorifying.

The exposition
of the
conclusion,

Theoph. I cannot sufficiently maruell at this abridgement or bremarie of prayer, as also the two former, namely of
saith

faith and the law; seeing that in so few words, and in so exact order, they containe such hard things, and so excellent doctrine.

Mat. Thou doest indeed not without cause marvell at them. For in them shineth the wonderful wisdom of god, and they do very well agree together among themselves, in that order wherein we haue propounded them. For faith teacheth vs all things that are to bee beleeued vnto our saluation; and I set it in the first place, as it were the foundation of the rest. But the law, concerning all things that be required to the yeelding of obedience vnto God, followeth in most excellent order, as the fruit and witness of faith. Finally in the last place commeth prayer, because of our selues we can neither beleene, nor do any thing that is pleasing vnto God; by the which we be taught, by what means we may obtaine both at his hands. And in these is contained the summe of all Christian doctrine.

Faith.

The Law.

Prayer.

Theoph. Before I go to any other thing, I wil propound two questions concerning the doctrine of prayer.

1. First, prayer seemeth to be vnprofitable, seeing wee can by it obtain nothing at the hands of God, besides that which he hath already determined in his vchangeable prouidence to giue vs: neither doth he cease to giue it, although we pray not.

2. Secondly, it seemeth superfluous, that we should pray vnto God, to shew him what things we haue need of, forasmuch as he knoweth them better then our selues. Now it is by part to answer to the former, which concerneth the prouidence of God,

Mat. They bee much deceiued who for this cause abstaine from prayer. For the prouidence of God taketh not away second causes, such as prayer is; yea rather it doth stablish and strengthen them: For God vseth them as instruments for the performance of that which he had appointed before. But I remember a story, which if I be not deceiued, will bring light vnto this question. A certaine Nobleman well furnished with horses and armour, went to war. And it fell out that hee tooke his iorney by the house of a verie faithfull Pastor of the Church knowne

Whether
the prouidence of
God should
keepe vs from
prayer.

to him long before. This man very earnestly admonished him, to be diligent in prayer, by the which he might moue the Lord to prosper his enterprises. He straight way reasoneth concerning the prouidence of God, as if he should haue said, that God had already determined of all things that should come to passe: and therefore that his decree could not be changed by his prayers. That good Minister answered; I would therefore aduise thee to send away thy horses & thy armour as things vnprofitable, forasmuch as the issue of warre dependeth vpon the prouidence of God, so as no other thing can come to passe, besides that which he hath determined. The souldier answered, that such as went to war could not without rashnesse lay aside their armour, because they were instrumēt, by the which God is wont to giue the victory to such as it seemed good vnto him. The same also might I say of prayer (saith the Minister) by the which the Lord vseth to giue vs the things that be necessary, as well for the vse of this life, as for everlasting saluation; and therefore that it was no lesse rashnesse, to neglect it vnder the pretence of Gods prouidence, especially seeing it is in so many places commended of God with innumerable promises made vnto them that doe often exercise themselves in it: and the Sonne of God himselfe hath giuen vs an example thereof, who also doth commaund that wee should pray without ceasing. By the which answer that Nobleman was not a little edified.

Theo. I may confesse the same of my selfe. Furthermore I doe acknowledge, that hitherto I did neuer know the answer to this question so clearely, as I haue vnderstood it by this comparison of armour, which indeed I thinke most fit to bring light vnto this doubt. And verily in the mean time it doth not a little agree vnto prayer. For prayer is vnto vs in stead of spirituall weapons, by the which we may fight against & ouercome our spirituall enemies, the duell, the flesh, & sin. Hitherto is referred the saying of *Paul*; I beseech you brethren for our Lord Iesus Christs sake, and the loue of the Spirit, that yee woulde strue with me by your prayers to God for mee. Moreover, this

this reason ought to take place in all the affaires of men: the euent and issue whereof notwithstanding it depend & hang vpon Gods prouidence, yet are not meanes to bee neglected, which the Lord ministreth vnto vs to do them by: otherwise God is tempted and defied.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other question: what need we to craue of God by prayer things necessary, seeing that he knoweth them far better than we our selues?

Mat. Although he do, yet his will is that we should obtaine them by dayly prayers.

1. First, that we may be kept in some feare and reuerence by this outward adoration & worship, by the which also he meaneth to exercise vs continually in thankfulness that we in y so much the more acknowledge him to be the fountaine of all good things.

That it is necessary to pray to God although he know better then our selues what is expedient for vs.

2. Secondly, he doth so much the more shew his loue toward vs, whē he doth so far abase himself, that he vouchsafeth to hear our complaints one after another seuerally, that he may prouide for them, so much as he shall know to be conuenient. And by this meanes he enflameth vs to the loue of himself, and causeth vs to put all our hope & confidence in him.

3. Thirdly, by that familiar communing or talking with him, he meaneth to make vs well acquainted with his excellent Maiesty, that we may be bold to flie to him the more freely in al our necessities, as vnto our most mercifull father.

4. Last of all, he doth this, that we may more & more confesse, that whatsoeuer good thing we haue, cometh from him alone; that we should giue him thanks, and vse it to his glory. For if hee giue vs good things vnasked, we should easily beleue either that they were from our selues, or else that they came to vs by chance.

Theoph. While thou shewest me the cause, why the Lord would haue vs to obtaine by prayer the things that hee hath determined to giue vs, thou hast with the same labor declared the excellency and worthinesse of it. For I perceiue, that by it, almost the whole first Table of the Law is fulfilled.

Mat. Thou iudget right. For by it, God is acknowledged with the minde, worshipped with the body, & sanctified and hallowed with the mouth.

Therefore also he requireth prayer of vs, as his especial worship: and among all the good things that he bestoweth vpon vs, it is the greatest; forasmuch as by it we may haue access to his Maiesty, so often as we please. For, that good heavenly Father suffereth vs comming to him familiarly, and laying open our wants to him, euen as vve might doe vvith some familiar friend of ours. Moreouer, as the lawfull vse of prayer is very acceptable to God, and most profitable for our selues, so on the contrary side, ther is nothing more displeasing vnto God, and that doth more prouoke his vvraath, then the abuse of it.

Theoph. What is that abuse?

Mat. It may be referred to fixe heads.

What corruption Sa.
than hath
brought in
to prayer.

1. First, when vve make our prayers to any others, or vnto himself in any other name, but in the name of Christ. And in this idolaters do offend, that flie to Angels, or to the Saints receiued into heauen.

2. Secondly, vvhen the povver of God is tyed to some certaine prayers: vvhich superstitious persons do, that number their prayers, who also haue certaine set formes of prayer, which they thinke vnlawfull to exceede.

3. Thirdly, whē God is prayed to, only with the mouth, the hart in the meane time being very far off: by the which sinne, the Maiesty of God is indeede shamefully despised. But therein they are especially deceiued, that pray in a strange tongue which they vnderstand not. For it is impossible that our minde should attend vpon the things which we vnderstand not.

4. Fourthly, when any prayeth vnto God with a vain opinion of his owne righteouinesse, so as he be no whit rouched with the true sense and feeling of his owne misery. And therein hypocrites, and iustitaries do offend; of which number that proud Pharisee was, who in praying, gaue thanks to God that he was not like to other men.

5. Fifthly, when any impenitent person, that indeuou-
reth not to amend his life, prayeth; and this is the most
common

common fault of prayer, and vsuall also with them, which otherwise bragge of the profession of the Gospell. Who notwithstanding they auoide the foure former faults, yet are not free from this prophaning of the name of god, but do most of all fall into the contempt of it.

Theoph. How?

Mat. Dost thou aske? Is not this to contemne his maiesty, when they pray to God that his name may be halloved, which they do defile through their blasphemies and cursed oathes?

That his kingdome may come; when they make a scorn of the ministry of the Church?

That his will may be done, which they do euery day set themselves against; and which more is, be in a great tume, if any thing fall out contrary to their own will?

Craue dayly bread, which they get by vnlawfull means?

That he will forgieue them their sins, as they forgieue their neighbours; & in the meane time pursue them with deadly hatred that haue done them wrong, and worke them all euils and milchiefe?

That he will not leade them into temptacion; but in the meane while purposely seeke vanities and allurements of the world, whereinto they may be led?

Theoph. But it may be objected, that none but meere profane persons, do the things that be against this praier.

Mat. I graunt. But if a man do against it in one onely point, hee doth no lesse mocke God: for that cannot spring from any where else, saue from the contempt of his most holy Maiestie, so as he doe it wittingly, and willingly.

Therefore *Iames* sayth; Whosoeuer keepeth the whole Law, and yet faileth in one point, is guilty of all. *Iames. 2. 10*

For, euen as if one of the vitall parts, wherein the life is in a mans body, be hurt, it bringeth death vnto a man, although all the other be well: So falleth he into destruction, that applyeth himselfe to some good workes, and abstaineth from many sins, neuerthelesse in the meane time continue in some one sin, and flattereth himselfe in it, and repenteth not.

Theoph. But thou vnderstandest not this, of the sins which we oftentimes commit, through the infirmity of our flesh.

Mat. These things bee vnderstood, neither of other, nor of these sins; so as there be repentance and a desire to amend: for then God of his mercy doth pardon & forgieue them all in Christ Iesus.

Theoph. The sixth and last fault in prayer is behind.

Mat. When a man prayeth without faith, that is without assurance of being heard: and it is as it were the effect, and that which hangeth vpon the former sine. Neuertheless, this is a most grievous sinne: for that distrust must needs arise from this, that we beleue that God either can not, or will not performe the things we pray for, or else that he heareth not our prayers: which verily cannot com into the minde of any man, but he denieth either his power, or his goodnesse, or his Godhead.

Jam. 1. 6.

For this cause *James* saith, that euery one should pray with faith and wauer not: for hee that wauereth, is like a waue of the sea, toft of the winde, and caried away; neither let that man think, that he shall obtaine any thing of God. Christ also saith; Whatsoeuer you shall aske in prayer, if you beleue, you shall receiue it.

Mat. 21. 22

Theoph. But why doest thou call this fault the effect of the former?

Mat. Because faith cannot stand with idolatry, nor with superstition, nor with prophanesse, nor with hypocrisie; but especially, if there be an euill conscience: for euery the faithfull themselues finde it true by experience in themselves, that they cannot assure themselves that god is mercifull to them to heare their prayers, if through infirmity they fall into any sin, till they be reconciled to him by true repentance. Therefore faith is as it were the soule of true prayer: for it comprehendeth all the conditions of it. Moreouer, as by it God is glorified, so also it is alwaies heard of him. But contrariwise, as the fained is despised, so he not only neuer heareth it, but doth also contemne it, & most grievously reuengeth the makers of it, as those of whom his most holy name is profaned.

The. This

Theoph. This morning thy discourse of good vvorks did not a little delight me, but this our disputatiō of prayer hath very greatly edified and comforted me. And by it in summe I haue learned these things;

1. How we ought to pray: namely, that our prayers be directed vnto God from the hart: but yet so, that we be touched with the right feeling of our owne pouerty and misery, and with true repentance of our sins.

2. Secondly, what is to be asked at the hāds of God, namely the things that concerne his glory, and our owne saluation and profite.

3. Finally, by what meanes we shall obtain them: euen if they be asked of vs with faith in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ. But I beseech God our heavenly father, that the prayers that shall be made of vs, may be free from all those euill cōditions which thou hast reckened vp; that he himselte may so much the more be glorified by them, and we dayly haue experience of the effect of them: so as

He may comfort vs in our aduersities,

Helpe our necessities,

Succour our infirmities,

Bring helpe to our weakenesse,

And strengthen vs in his loue and feare,

And finally, confirme vs in the hope of euerlasting life, through Iesus Christ his Son our most beloued Lord.

Mat. So be it.

Now at length, we haue declared the chiefe points of Christian Religion: and I hope by the grace of God, that they which are behind shall be handled to morrow. In the meane time, God giue you good night,

Theoph. And you also.

THE THIRD BOOKE OF Christian religion: intreating of the outward meanes, by the which God bringeth vs to ſaluation.

CHAP. I.

*Of the miniſtery of the word: by the which the holy
Ghoſt begetteth faith in our hearts, keepeth and in-
creaſeth it.*

Theophilus.

O D ſaue you moſt dearly beloued
and reuerend brother.

Mat. God ſaue you alſo, moſt lo-
uing *Theophilus*.

Theoph. Shall it not be troubleſome to
thee for vs to returne to the diſpu-
tation which we brake off, & to aſſay
to bring it to an end?

Mat. Nay rather (*Theophilus*) it ſhall be a moſt pleaſant
thing vnto me. Neuertheleſſe, before we come to the mat-
ter, I pray God, that as hitherto he hath bin with vs, he wil
alſo be with vs hereafter to the end.

Theoph. So be it. I will in few words repeat our former
diſcourſe, that the things which haue bene handled alrea-
dy, may be ioyned with thoſe that follow.

1. Firſt, hitherto hath bene handled the chief grounds
of our ſaluation, namely the perfect iuſtice of God, and
the deadly ſickneſſe of mans ſin.

2. Secondly the moſt perfect remedy of it, euen Ieſus
Chriſt.

3. Furthermore, the applying of this remedy vnto vs
by faith, by the which we recouer ſpiritual health, that is,
we are iuſtified before God, and therethrough made
partakers of eternall life.

4. And

A briefe re-
hearſall of
the former
bookes.



4. And last of all, faith, which is wrought in our harts by the holy Ghost that regenerateth vs, together with repentance from whence good works do flow: which indeed be testimonies of our faith; but especially prayer. Therefore this one thing remaineth, that wee vnderstand by what means the holy Ghost doth regenerate or renew vs.

The summe
of the third
booke.

Mat. Peter affirmeth, that we are begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of the liuing God. And therefore we do by good right say, that by it the holy Ghost begetteth in vs, both faith, and repentance.

1. Pet. 1.

Thoph. When hath the word of God that force?

Mat. When it is preached of such as haue a lawfull calling thereto. For *Paule* saith, How shal they beleue in him of whom they haue not heard? How therefore without preaching? but how shall they preach except they be sent? Out of which words he draweth this conclusion; Therefore faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Rom. 10. 13

Rom. 10. 17

Theoph. There be therefore diuerse degrees or steps of our saluation. For it is plaine by that which hath bin said, that we cannot obtaine it,

1. Vnlesse wee be reconciled to God.
2. But wee cannot be reconciled to God, without Christ.
3. Christ without faith we can neuer haue. Lo heere three degrees, and now thou addest the fourth;
4. That we cannot haue faith without the preaching of the word.

Mat. So it is. Whosoever therefore despise the preaching of the word of God (which is in respect of vs the first step of our saluation) do despise & contemne their own saluation. For the Apostle saith; After that the world in the wisdom of God knew not God by his wisdom, (that is by the same and workmanish of this world, by the vvhich God maketh manifest his exceeding power & wisdom) it pleased God by foolish preaching to saue beleeuers.

Of the word
preached &
received by
faith.

1. Cor. 1. 21.

Theoph. Why calleth he preaching foolish, which in the former verse he had so highly extolled?

Mat. He doth that according to the opinion of men,

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of whom for the most part it is despised, no otherwise, then if it were foolishnesse: notwithstanding he teacheth, that with God it is the greatest wisdom vnto those of whome it is receiued and entertained with due reuerence. Which Christ confirmeth when he sayth; The kingdom of heauen is like a treasure hidden in the field, which when a man found he hid it, and for ioy of it, he goeth away and selleth all he hath, and buieth that field.

Mat. 13. 44

Theoph. But in those parables, Christ intreateth not of the preaching of the word, but of the kingdome of heauen, which indeed he sayth is like vnto sundry things.

Mat. It is not to be doubted, but that by the name of the kingdom of heauen, he doth vnderstand the preaching of the word: and this is easily gathered euen out of the former parables, wherein he speaketh of the seed; for in them by the interpretatiō of Christ himself, the preaching of the word is meant.

Theoph. Why is the preaching of the word called of Christ by the name of the kingdome of heauen?

Mat. To the end he might shew, that it is as it were a key, by the which the gate of the kingdome of heauen is opened vnto vs. Which thing in another place he confirmeth, when he calleth the ministry of the word, the keys of the kingdome of heauen.

Mat. 16. 19.

Theoph. Now I desire to hear of thee what Christ meaneth by those parables of the treasure hidden in the field, and of that precious pearle, for the purchasing wherof, he counselleth vs to sell all we haue?

Mat. This is his mind; That the ministry of the word farre excelleth all earthly riches, and that therefore it is to be preferred before all our goods: yea rather that they ought all to be forsaken, then to suffer our selues to be deprived of it.

But in hearing the worde, wee must diligently take heede of two extremities, whereinto Sathan labourereth all he can to bring vs, that so he may take from vs the fruite which wee are to reape of the preaching of the word. The one is the contempt of him which preacheth the word. The other, when we attribute or giue vnto him

A most profitable admonition to such as heare the preaching of the word.

him

him more then is right.

Theoph. What discommodity haue we by the former of the two extremities.

Mat. That we haue no fruit of his preaching, whose person we despise. For the contempt of the doctrine doth necessarily follow the contempt of his person. For this cause *Paul*, meaning to commend Pastors in respect of the excellency of their office, applyeth vnto them this saying of *Isay*; How beautifull are the feete of them that preach peace, and bring tydings of good things! *Isa. 52. 7. Rom. 10. 15*

Theoph. What discommodity ariseth of the other extremitie?

Mat. When too much is ascribed to the person of him which preacheth the word, it followeth, that the force of preaching is attributed vnto his person. And therefore when that is yeilded to men that is due vnto God, men spoyle themselues of the fruite of the ministry. And this is that wherein in former times the Corinthians offended, when one said; I am *Paul*; I am *Apoll*os; I am of *Cephas*; & I am *Christ*; which mischiefe, that the Apostle might remedy, he beareth downe the persons of the Ministers in these words; Who the is *Paul*, & who is *Apoll*os, but the ministers by whom you haue beleeued? I haue planted, *Apoll*o hath watered, but God hath giuen the increase. Therefore, saith he, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither hee that watereth, but God that giueth the increase. For this cause the same Apostle saith; God hath put the treasure of preaching in earthen vessels, that the excellency of that power might be of God, and not of vs. That is to say, God for the most part sendeth ministers of abiect and base condition, that their excellencie shoulde not darken the power, which hee sheweth soorth by their ministry. *1. Cor. 1. 12. 1. Co. 3. 5. 1. Cor. 4. 7.*

Theoph. Now I see the inconueniences whereunto those two extremities do carry vs. Which that we may auoide, the meane must be held and kept, namely that wee honour the Ministers for their office committed vnto them; and their preaching, in respect of God, whose power is manifested by it.

Mat.

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Mat. Thou iudgest rightly. For we must doe as if a king should send vs some gift by the meanest of his seruants. For we would entertaine him honorably, in consideration of the gift brought by him: but the gift it selfe we would receiue, for the kings sake, that sent it.

Theoph. Let vs go forward. I desire that thou wouldst shew, what is the vse of preaching, after that the holy Ghost by it hath wrought in vs faith and repentance.

What the
vse of pre-
aching is, af-
ter we haue
faith and re-
pentance.
Ephes. 4. 16

Mat. That both may be preserved in vs, yea rather increased. For as a young child after he is borne, standeth in need of nourishment, that life may both bee preserved and increased: so he, that is begotten anew by the seed of the word of God, must be fed by the same, that hee may get strength, and spirituall increase, till, saith the Apostle, we come to a perfect man, and to the measure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ; that is, till we come to perfection it selfe, whereto indeed wee shal neuer come so long as we liue in this world.

Theoph. Is not the reading of the worde of God sufficient for these things, although there be no preaching?

Amos 8. 11

Mat. No not so: euen as the vse of meates is not sufficient to the nourishment of mans body, except they bee dressed and prepared. For which cause verily, God when he would threaten an extreame punishment to his people, saith; Behold the daies come that I will send a famine into the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of God.

By the which words he meaneth, that we cannot be spiritually fed, without preaching. Yet neuertheless the often reading of the word of God, bringeth no little helpe to the preaching of it. For otherwise it should neuer haue bene so diligently commended of God.

Whereby it appeareth, that the holy Ghost, after it hath by the vncorrupt seed of the word of God, wrought in vs faith and repentance, confirmed, & as it were nourisheth them, both by the preaching and reading of the same word, and by the vse of the Sacraments, ordained of God for the ratifying and sealing of it.

Theoph. We will therefore speake of the Sacramentes
when

when we shall haue handled two questions appertaining to the preaching of the word.

1. The first is, concerning the calling of the Pastors, to whom this preaching is committed.

Of the calling of the Ministers of the word.

2. The other is, of the word that they are to preach. I will therefore begin with the first. For what cause saidst thou, that the pastors ought to be lawfully called to preach that word?

Mat. The cause is most eident. For. euen as in a kingdome well ordered, there is no man which ought or may exercise any publike office but by the commandement of the king: so none ought or can be accompted a true Pastor in the Church of God to preach his word, except he be by him called with a lawfull calling. For how can wee beleuee, that God ratifieth that which a mortall man doth with vs, vnlesse it be first certainly knowne that hee hath his commission from him?

Theo. What is that lawfull vocation or calling?

Mat. It is two-fold.

The one extraordinary.

The other ordinary.

Vocation of Ministers two-fold.

Theoph. What is that extraordinary calling?

Mat. When any is called immediatly of God: such as was the calling of the Apostles;

Theoph. What is the meaning of the word Apostle?

Ma. It is a Greeke word, which signifieth Sent, & they were called by that name, to declare their office: namely because they were sent of God by Christ, to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world. Therefore Christ said vnto them; As my Father sent me, so do I send you. *Thom. 20. 17*

Extraordinary calling.

Theoph. Why callest thou that calling extraordinary?

Mat. Because God vseth it. extraordinarily, and that onely for a time, namely when the Churches are not yet settled and established: as in the time of Christ, when the Gospell was knowne scarce to any mortall man.

Theo. This therefore thou meanest, After the Churches be planted & settled; that the ordinary calling should succede the extraordinarie, to the end it may haue place in them.

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Mat. Yea verily.

Theoph. Let vs now therefore intreate of that ordinarie calling; and first shew what it is.

Mat. It is two- fold:

Ordinarie
calling.

1. Inward, and 2. Ourward.

Theo. What is the inward calling?

Mat. That holy desire which any hath in the ministry of the Church to serue the glorie of God, wherewith he is mouued to prepare himselfe to the faithful execution of that office, when he shall be called thereunto with the outward calling.

Theoph. What is that outward calling?

Mat. The lawfull choise of a visible Church met together in the name of Christ. For he hath promised, if but two or three be gathered together in his name, to be present in the midst of the. After this maner were the pastors of the primitiue Church called to the ministerie: & this is the true doore of Christs sheepfold, whereof mention is made in *John* in these words; Verily, verily, I saie vnto you, hee that entreth not in by the doore into the fold of the sheep, but climeth vp another way, is a theefe & a robber.

John. 10.1.

Theo. How many things be required, that the choise of the Church may be lawfull?

3. things re-
quired in
the lawfull
calling of a
minister.
Tit. 1.7.

Mat. Three: first, that there be a search and triall both of the conuersation, & also of the learning of him that is to be chosen. And this indeed is necessarily required in a minister, as *Paule* expressly warneth; A Bishop must be faultlesse as Gods steward: not frowardly pleasing himself, nor angry, nor giuen to wine, no striker, nor couetous of filthy gain, but giuen to hospitalitie a loue of those that are good, temperate, iust, holy, sober, holding fast that faithfull word which serueth to doctrine, that he may also be able to exhort with holosome doctrine, and to conuince the gainsayers.

Theoph. Is the office of a Bishop, the same with the office of a Pastor?

Mat. Yea altogether. For when *Paule* calleth them by that name, they be put in remembrance of their duety, as also by other names, by the which they be called euerie where

where in the Scriptures, as Ministers, Shepheards, Elders.

Theo. Let vs therefore weigh the signification, & reason of these names.

Mat. First of all, the name of Bishop, which signifieth an episcopall, or one that watcheth, admonisheth them that are called to the ministry of the Church, to watch, and to haue their eyes alwaies set vpon the flocke committed to their charge, that it be not corrupted either with ill manners, or with false doctrine. Bishop.

Secondly, they are called Ministers or seruants of Iesus Christ, that they may vnderstand, that they serue not men but God, and therefore ought with the more diligence to apply themselves to the execution of their function. Ministers.

Thirdly, they be called Pastors or Shepheards, to put them in remembrance that the flock of Christ is continually to be fed with the word of God, and to be looked vnto, that the diuell, which is a rauening wolfe, enter not into it. Shepheards.

Finally, they be called Seniors, Elders, or Auncients, to declare the grauity of maners, wherewith it is fit they should be beautified, so as they may be free from all lightnesse and vanity, which for the most part is vnuall in young yeares. Elders.

Ib. op. Therefore these sundry names, are not tokens of any degrees or dignitie.

Mat. Not at all: For Christ heretofore commanded this to his Disciples struing among themselves for the primacy or chieftey, that he which would be the chiefe among them, should be seruant to all. Which indeed was not spoken for their sakes alone, but is set forth as a rule to all Ministers of the Church.

Theob. Thou hast now declared vnto me that first collation of the lawfull calling of Ministers: I pray thee go on to the other.

Mat. Another is this, that men come not to it by any corruptions or gifts, but that it be free, as they that haue the power to chuse, should haue onely the glory of God, & the edification of his Church, before their eyes.

Thirdly, that he which is chosen haue a Church appointed

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ted vnto him for the execution of his office, whose duetie
it is to looke vnto it diligently and carefully.

Theoph. If it fall out that he which is chosen, do forsake
his calling, is he to be accompted a Pastor or Minister?

Mat. No verily: vnlesse peraduenture he bee enforced
thereto, for want of health. For otherwile he is no more
worthy the name of a Shepheard, then he that hath vt-
terly giuen ouer the keeping and care of the flocke.

Theo. Is it lawfull for him that is called to the mini-
sterie of the Church, to leaue off that calling to take a-
nother?

Mat. It is not lawfull: vnlesse it be vpon some very spe-
ciall, known, and approued occasion. For the Apostle wit-
nesseth, that a necessity lyeth vpon him to preach the Go-
spell, who is once called to the ministry of the Church;
1. Cor. 9. 16 woe vnto him (saith he) if he preach not the Gospel.

Theoph. You haue verily reckened vp worthy condi-
tions; which whosoeuer hath, is indeed to be accompted a
Pastor or Shepheard in the flock of Christ, namely;

1. That he feele within him an inward calling;
2. Be of good conuersation;
3. Offsound doctrine;
4. Apt to teach;
5. Be lawfully chosen by the Church.
6. And, finally, performe his office diligently toward
the flocke committed to his charge. But yet you make
no mention of personal succession frō the Apostles time:
without which, notwithstanding, many thinke that the cal-
ling is void and of none effect.

Personall
succession.

Mat. I grant indeed, that, to make a man lawfully cal-
led to the ministry of the Church, Apostolicall succession
is necessarie: which neuer thelesse is to be vnderstoode of
the doctrine of the Apostles; not of their persons. For,
euen as heretofore *Matthias* was successor to *Judas*, that
is, a holy seruant of God to a traitor: so also it hath fallen
out diuerse times, that *Judas* hath succeeded *Matthias*, that
is, schismaticks & hereticks haue succeeded the most faith-
ful seruants of Christ. Moreover there is no testimony in
all the Scripture, by the which it can be prooued, that that
personall

personall succession is required as necessary to the calling of the Ministers. This indeed is true, that, if there be both, the calling therby hath the more authority; as it was in that which they call the primitive Church: for in it the personall succession was ioyned with the truth of doctrine. But when the truth of doctrine is ouerthrowne, then personall succession is nothing else but a visard, which Sathan useth to blindfold the eyes of men, to the end he may keep them in error. Therefore, when it commeth so to passe, as it is now in the Church of Rome, what madnesse is it, to desire that the election & calling of Ministers, to preach the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, should hang vpon their person & will, that bewray themselues to be his open enemies: & whose calling if it were examined by the former rule expressed in the word of God, should be found to be void and nothing worth.

Theoph. I desire you in few words to declare vnto me those points, wherein the truth of Christian doctrine is ouerthrowne, in the Papacie.

Mat. It standeth chiefly in two heades or principall things.

A short re-
hearsall of
Popish im-
pieties.

The first is, in that the sincere & true worship of God is defiled with innumerable superstitions, yea with idolatrie. The other is that which respecteth the benefit of Christ: which indeed is ouerthrowne, with the doctrine

1. Of free will,
2. Of iustification by works,
3. Of the merit of works,
4. Of the intercession of Saints,
5. Of the Popes supremacie,
6. Of the works of supererogation,
7. Of Pardons,
8. Of Purgatory fire,

Out of which vngodly and wicked doctrines, the Masse was at length forged & patched vp, by the Church of Rome.

Theo. The first five of these haue already bene declared by you: but the sixt, namely of works of supererogation, I scarce vnderstand what it meaneth, I would therefore haue you shew it me briefly.

Mat. To supererogate in Latine signifieth so much, as in the businesse of another man to lay out a greater sum then we received of him, by meanes whereof he is made debter vnto vs.

But these men dreame, that men may do more good works then God hath commanded: and those according to this similitude, they call workes of supererogation, signifying that in respect of them they account God to be in their debts: then which doctrine, what is more monster. like? for any to beleue, that a mortall man can bind his creator vnto him: to whom notwithstanding, whatsoever good thing he is able at any time to performe, that all he is indebted and bound to do, according as hath ben shewed of vs in the chapter of works. But what a mischief is it, that a great part of these workes of supererogation, is nothing else but idolatry or superstition: such as be religious pilgrimages, monasticall life, and such other of this kinde, wherewith God is euen offended. Wherefore seeing they haue set themselves against his will, the Lord is not onely nothing in their debt: but contrariwise, they are so much the more holden guiltie before his iudgement seate.

Theoph. Verily till now I knew not that opinion, as neither the other concerning pardons, which I desire thee to declare vnto me.

Mat. It is no lesse absurd then the other, forasmuch as it longeth vpon it. And, these doctrines doe leane and stay themselves vpon two most impious & vngodly foundations.

1. First, because they thinke that Christ by his death hath satisfied, not for the punishment, but for the fault onely of those finnes which are committed of vs after baptism: and therefore that we our selues must satisfie for it, either in this life, or in purgatory fire, till it be fully paid.

2. Secondly, that one drop of Christs blood was sufficient for our redemption. And that whatsoever he suffered besides, which is indeed an infinite merit, is laide vp in the treasure of the Church, together with the innumerable workes of supererogation wrought by he-Saints and the

Saints,

Saints, for the which God is indebted vnto them. Of this treasure (say they) the Pope is the dispenser and steward, whereof he giueth to such as he seeth good, that is, to such as pay money. That gift they call Indulgences or pardons, because they serue to remit or lessen somewhat of the punishment, to be otherwise suffered in Purgatory fire.

As often therefore as the Pope by his indulgences granteth ten, twenty, or an hundred yeares of pardon, this he meaneth, that so much is diminished of the time of that punishment, which we had deserued for full satisfaction to be suffered for our sinnes, either in this life, or in the life to come. Yea they say further (such is the height of their impiety) that these pardons doe profite the dead, namely such as be in the fire of Purgatory; insomuch, as that if the Pope would seriously and in earnest draw forth that his treasure of pardons, he could (say they) empty it, and send the soules tormented in Purgatory directlie into the heauens.

Theoph. Why therefore doth he it not? according to the paterne of that pardon, the Vicar whereof he saith that he is vpon the earth.

Mat. Lest that Purgatory fire should be altogether put out; by the which the Church of Rome hath gotten so great riches wherewith it now aboundeth.

Theoph. I do verily see, that vpon good cause it was said of thee, that the truth of doctrine is vtterly ouerthrowe in the Church of Rome. For these two points, which thou hast euen now spoken of, doe almost altogether abolish and take away the grace of God, and benefite of Christ. Let vs now go forward to the rest. Concerning the first part of this point, namely the lawfull calling of Ministers, I require no more. Let vs speake of the other, namely of the word of God which they are to preach. How many principall parts be there of it?

Mat. Two: the Law, and the Gospell.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou, by the name of the Law?

Mat. That doctrine by which is taught what is to be done to obey God; which indeede is contained in the ten

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commandements which we lately expounded.

The Gospel

Theoph. But what is the Gospel?

Mat. The word of it selfe signifieth good tydings: but in this place it is taken for that doctrine, which containeth the promise of forgiveness of sinnes, and euerlasting life, which God hath made vnto vs in the word, by his Son. And it is called good tydings, because it is the most excellent message of all that can be brought.

Theoph. To what end must the law be preached?

Mat. That men, by the knowledge of their sinnes, may be brought to Christ, and to repentance and amendment of life. For therefore God gaue it, as we haue said in his place.

Theoph. Whereunto is the preaching of the Gospel to be referred?

Mat. Hereto, that the penitēt may be assured of the forgiveness of sins, and the enioying of eternall life. For this cause Christ saith; that so he ought to haue suffered, and
Mat. 24. 46. rise againe the third day: and that, in his name, repentance and forgiveness of sins should bee preached vnto all nations. But he saith expressly, *in his name*; because, both repentance, and the forgiveness of sinnes, haue their ground and foundation in the force of his death and resurrection: without the which wee can neither repent, nor obtain forgiveness of sins; as it hath also bene laid in its owne place.

Theoph. What is the cause, that Christ maketh mention of repentance, before the forgiveness of sins?

Mat. Not indeede to teach that repentance goeth before forgiveness of sins: forasmuch as this rather goeth before that; for no man can repent, except (his sins being pardoned) the holy Ghost be giue him, by the help whereof he may repent: But to teach the Ministers, that the doctrine of remission of sins, is not to be applyed but to the penitent; seeing that, saith (by the which we are made partakers of Christ and his benefites) maketh it selfe apparent and to be seene by repentance; which also was shewed in the proper place.

Theoph. Seeing repentance is to be preached with remission

mission of sinnes, it followeth, that the morall Law is not contrarie to the Gospel of Grace.

Mat. Neither is it indeede contrarie, but in respect of them which seeke their saluation, either wholly or in part, by their good workes: for the Apostle saith; As many of you as be iustified by the Law, are made void of Christ, and are fallen from grace. The agreement of the Law and Gospel. Gal. 3. 4.

But in respect of the faithfull, who know that their saluation dependeth vpon the onely mercy of God in Christ, there is a good agreement betweene the Law and the Gospel. For the Law sheweth vs sin, and the damnation that we haue pulled vpon our selues by it, and so it leadeth vs to the Gospel, by the which sin is put away and we discharged of condemnation.

Secondly, the Law sheweth what is to be done; but the Gospel, by the spirit of regeneration, ministrerh vnto vs power both to will and to doe.

Theoph. Seeing there is so good a consent betweene the Law and the gospel, wherefore doth Paule say; You are not vnder the Law, but vnder grace? for it seemeth he would say thus much; that the Law is abolished and taken away by the Gospel of grace. Rom. 6. 14

Mat. And indeede he vnderstandeth it of the abolishing of the Law by the Gospel, but concerning the condemnation and curse of it only, as he himselfe in another place expoundeth, in these words; Christ hath redeemed vs from the curse of the Law, when he was made a curse for vs. Howbeit concerning the vse of it, it is no way abolished; for Christ himselfe saith; I came not to take away the law, but to fulfill it. Which also the Apostle confirmeth in the Epistle to the Romans. For, after that he had taught, that we are iustified not by the Law, but by faith in Iesus Christ, he presently addeth; Do we therefore make the Law void through faith? God forbid: yea rather we establish the Law. And indeede, why should that most excellent benefit, which the Gospel yeldeth vnto vs, discharge vs from the worship and seruing of God: by the which rather wee are the more inuited and stirred vp to performe it towards him. How the law is taken away. Gal. 3. 13. Mat. 5. 17. Rom. 3. 31.

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Theoph. Is the Law therefore neuer to be separated from the Gospell?

The law neuer to be separated from the Gospell.

Mat. The one indeed is to be distinguished from the other, that we confound not the mercy of God with our works; which they do corruptly, that will mingle the righteousness of faith, with the righteousness of the Law, that is to say, heaven with earth: neuer thelesse, they are not to be separated, neither yet to be preached apart.

Theoph. But Christ lending forth his Apostles to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world, maketh mention
Mat. 16. 35 onely of the Gospell: for he saith; Go preach the Gospell to every creature.

Mat. The word Gospell, set by it selfe, comprehendeth also vnder it the doctrine of repentance, and therefore the law, no lesse then the doctrine of remission of sinnes. Which indeede is plaine by the place of *Luke* alleaged
Luk. 24. 46 euen now, who expoundeth those wordes of *Marke*: his words be these, Christ ought to suffer, and in his name repentance and forgiveness of sinnes to be preached. It is

A right manner of preaching.

therefore the duty of Ministers, in their sermons, by the preaching of the Lawe, to bring men to the true knowledge and feeling of their sinnes, and to ioyne therewith the threatnings denoiced against the breakers of the law, and to exhort them to true repentance and amendment of life. Then they ought to set before them the forgiveness of sinnes, from the doctrine of the Gospell of grace. But contrariwise, they ought to propound wrath and the iust iudgement of God, against the disobedient and stubburne, except they conuert and repent. And these indeed be the
The keys of the Church, keyes of the Church, which Christ had promised to *Peter*, and in him to the other Apostles, and to all Pastors: which also after his resurrection hee deliuered to his Apostles, when he sent them to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world.

Theoph. But why did he then promise those keyes to *Peter* alone, which neuerthelesse as thou sayest, he meant to giue to the other Apostles also.

Mat. Because then he spake to *Peter* onely. But as a little before, *Peter* not onely in his owne name, but also in the

name of all the rest of the Apostles, which had that one faith, had confessed that Iesus was the Christ, and the son of the living God: in like manner when Christ promised the keyes to *Peter*, he meant that they were also promised to the rest of the Apostles, which he doth sufficiently declare in the deliuey of them: for hee saith to all at once, Receive the holy Ghost. Whose finnes you remit, they are remitted to them: whose finnes you retaine, they be retained. The same also did the other Apostles and all the Pastors confirme, when exercising their ministry they vsed those keyes.

Theoph. Wherefore doth Christ call the ministry of Pastors, by the name of keyes?

Mat. To the end we might vnderstand, that the kingdom of heauen (as wee haue declared before) is by the ministry of the Church set open to the beleeuers and penitent, and that it is shut against the vnbeleeuers and stubburne: namely, when as by it the former haue their finnes forgiven, that so they may come to eternall life: but to the other they be retained, that so they may be shut from it. For God doth testify that in heauen, which the Ministers vpon earth praouice out of his word, euen as it appeareth by the words of christ himself vnto *Peter*: for after promise of the keyes, presently he addeth; Whatsoeuer thou shalt bind in earth, shall be bound in heauen: & whatsoeuer thou shalt loose in earth, shall be loosed in heauen. And the selfe same thing he repeated after to all the Apostles, to shew that they had like autoritie of binding and loosing, giuen to them with *Peter*.

Mat. 16. 19.

Theoph. Therefore to bind & loose, is nothing else but to declare the remission of sins, or to retaine them.

Mat. Indeepe nothing, as it is plaine by the interpretation of Christ himselfe: for he said to his Apostles in the place which euen now we recited, Receive the holy Ghost: whose finnes ye remit, they be remitted vnto them: whose finnes you shall retaine they shall bee retained. For there is no harder band then sin, forasmuch as being bound with it, we be held, and indeede willingly, vnder the power and tyranny of the diuell and death, and it cannot be loosed by

What it is to bind and loose.

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any strength of man, but by the onely might of Christ?

Theoph. Why then doth Christ commit the office of binding and loosing to the Minister? seeing hee himselfe alone, hath the power of binding and loosing.

2. Cor. 5. 19

Theoph. It is, that we may vnderstand, that the Ministers be as it were Ambassadors, and proclaimers of the will of God: which *Paule* teacheth in these words; God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himselfe, not imputing to them their sins: and hath put in vs this word of reconciliation. Therefore we are Ambassadors in the name of Christ: as though God by vs did exhort you, wee entreate you in Christes stead to be reconciled to God.

Theoph. I see not therefore that the Ministers haue more power of binding and loosing graunted them, then any other priuat man. For ther is none that may not assure the beleeuers & penitents of the forgiuenesse of his sins; & contrariwise, which may not set the iudgement of God before the vnbeleuer and obstinate, except he repent. And that verily shal be confirmed in heauen, as it was pronounced by that priuate person: for that is the will of God reuealed in his word.

Of the authoritie of the Ministers of the Church,

Mat. That is right indeede: but there is some speciall thing to bee considered in the promise of Christ made to the Ministers: namely, that by his spirite he will giue more efficacy and force to their words, then to the words of any priuate man; so as they shall by faith bee receiued of the beleuer, and shall terrifie the conscience of the vnbeleuer, and set before his eyes the wrath and iudgement of God. For otherwise the name of the keys of the kingdome of heauen, should falsely bee giuen vnto the ministry of the church: seeing, that to bring vs to enter into it, it is not inough that the doctrine of forgiuenesse of sinnes beate our eares, but especially that it enter into our harts, & be receiued of vs in faith and obedience: whereunto is referred that saying of *Paule*; Neither my speech, nor my preaching stood in the enticing words of mans wisdom, but in the demonstration or euidence of spiritual power. For this cause also *Isaiah* calleth the preaching of the word, the arme of the Lord, that is, the instrument, by the which

1. Cor. 2. 4.

J/47. 53.

he

he declareth his might and power, that he may bring vs to saluation.

Theoph. I see indeede, that the force and fruit of preaching the word of God is very great. For those three steps by the which we obtaine spirituall health, whereof thou didst entreate in the Chapter of Faith, are by it dayly called to vse and practise.

The efficacy & fruite of the word preached.

The. Thou iudgeth right. For first the law is preached, that we may acknowledge our deadly disease, namely sin: Secondly the Gospell is preached, wherein the sauing remedy is offered vnto vs in Christ.

Last of all, faith which is wrought in vs, and increased by the preaching of the word, applieth that medicine vnto vs, so as we obtaine saluation, euen the full forgiuenesse of all our sins.

Theoph. The article of remission of sins in the Creede, vnlesse I be deceiued, is therefore set after the Article of the Church, to the end we might know, that it is offered vnto vs by the ministry of it.

Mat. It is indeede and therefore there is no forgiuenesse of sins, neither saluation without the Church: as in the flood there was no safety out of the Arke of *Noah*, wherein also at that time the Church of God was then that vpp; that, being as it were, a type of it.

Theoph. You haue hitherto largely enough taught, that by the ministry of the word we do truly obtaine forgiuenesse of our sins. Notwithstanding, there be two things behind, whereof I will aske you, before we come to the other treatise.

1. First whether God do wholly (as they say) forgiue to the repentant all their sins?

2. Secondly, whether he forgiue the perfectly, namely remitteth the punishment and the fault, so as they be not any more imputed vnto vs?

Mat. Let vs speake of the former, in the first place. *Iohn* saith, that the blood of Christ doth wash vs from all sinne. He that saith *all*, excepteth nothing. Now, repentance yeeldeth vnto vs a more certaine testimony of our faith, by the which, as hath bene said, we be made partakers of Christ,

I Iohn. 1.7
All sins be
forgiuen to
the penitent.

and

and of his gifts. Whereupon it followeth, that whosoever repenteth may most certainly determine, that all his sins (albeit they be grievous) are forgiven and done away. Which also is taught, by the example of that sinful woman, and of the thief.

Mat. 12. 32. *Theoph.* But Christ saith, that the sinne against the holy Ghost shall never be forgiven.

Of the sinne against the holy Ghost. *Mat.* He saith so indeede: And the Apostle to the Hebrewes sheweth, that it is impossible that such as fall into it should be renewed by repentance. For that is the gift of God, granted to them onely, of whome he hath determined in Christ to have mercy.

Heb. 6. 4.

Theoph. But what is that sin against the holy Ghost?

Mat. These words, Against the holy Ghost, do suffice to declare what it is: namely, when any, after that he hath by the holy Ghost bin enlightened with the knowledge of the truth of the Gospell, standeth against that truth, not for feare, or through infirmity, but vpon wilfull malice. For then wittingly & willingly he resisteth the holy Ghost, and maketh warre against him.

Theoph. How knowest thou that this is the sin against the holy Ghost?

Mat. First, it may be gathered of that, which gave our Saviour Christ occasion to speake of it: namely, that hee might prooue the Scribes & Pharisees to be guilty of that horrible sin, who said, that the miracles which he did, were wrought by the Diuell, whereof notwithstanding they were not ignorant that God was the Author, and Christ himself by most certaine arguments did declare. And his miracles they did maliciously dispraise in the hatred of his doctrine, which they perceived was manifestly confirmed by them. From hence therefore it is plaine, that they sinned against the holy Ghost, who vpon set malice stand against the knowne truth. Adde hereunto, that by sundry places of the Scripture it appeareth, that euery other sinne is forgivable: not excepting that which is against the doctrine of faith; so as it be done either of ignorance, (as it was with *Paule*, when he persecuted the Church) or through infirmity & weakenesse: as when *Peter* denied Christ.

Theoph. 11

Tbo. It is verily a wonder, that so horrible wickednesse can enter into the mindes of men, as vpon purposed malice, to strue against the knowen truth.

Mat. It commeth to passe, by the iust iudgement of God, vnto thos'e that haue long and much despised and let light by his most pretious gifts; namely his louing kindnesse & mercy in Christ (the knowledge whereof, notwithstanding, he had vouchsafed them): and at length they be deliuered to the power of the Diuell, that by steppes and degrees they may fall to that extreame and finall Apostasie. And because they are by it become like vnto Sathā (namely in that, vpon knowledge and wilfull malice, they resist the truth) they, no otherwise then he himselte, be deprived of all hope of saluation.

Theoph. Let vs now come to the other question. When God forgueth sins, whether doth he it perfectly, so as he remitteth the punishment & the fault?

Mat. As God is perfect, so doth he perfectly forgieue finnes; so as he neuer remembreth them, nor imputeth them vnto vs. For so he saith euery where by his Prophets; If your finnes were as crimson, they shall be made whiter then snow: if they were as red as scarlet, they shall bee as wolle. I haue put away thy transgressions, as thicke clouds; and thy finnes, as a mist. He will lay aside our iniquities, & cast all our finnes into the bottome of the sea. As farre as the East is distant from the West, so farre doth he remooue our sins from vs. Neither is this any maruell. For, seeing the forgiveness of our sins is grounded vpon Christ, in whom they be fully punished, God should be vnjust, if hee required any thing further for them.

Theoph. But we read that *Dauid* suffered many punishments, after that (by the message of *Nathan*) he was certified of the forgiveness of his adultery. For the child that was borne vnto him of *Bethsheba* died. Moreouer also his sonne *Absolon* was raised vp against him; who both made warre vpon him, and defiled his wiues: which punishment was indeed denounced against him, by the Prophet. Whereupon it seemeth to follow, that God forgueth the sinne; but retaineth the punishment.

Whether
God remitteth the punishment & the fault.
Esa. 1. 18.
Esa. 44. 22.
Mich. 7. 19.
Psal. 103. 12.

An obiection
against the
doctrine of
remitting
the punishment
and
fault.

Mat.

The answer
to the ob-
jection.

Mat. This is the doctrine of the Romanists: from whence came the dreame of Pardons and Purgatorie fire, as hath before bin declared of vs. Neuerthelesse I am glad it is so come to passe, that we may fully speake of it in this place. For I will shew that it is most absurd, inasmuch as it separateth those things, which of their owne nature doe wholly hang together. For if thou take away the fault, there is no place left for punishment: otherwise God should bee vniust, if he should punish whom he accoûteeth not faultie. Moreover, seeing Christ himselfe in his owne bodie suffered the punishments due to our sins, it is not to bee doubted but that he hath discharged vs from the same: euen as *Esay* expressly affirmeth in these words; Verily hee hath borne our griefes and hath carried our sorrowes: and we thought him stricken, wounded of God, and humbled; but he was wounded for our iniquities, & broken for our sins. The chastisement of our peace was vpon him, and by his stripes we are healed, All wee as sinners haue gone astray, euery one hath turned to his owne way, and the Lord hath laide vpon him the iniquities of vs all. For this cause also *Paule* saith; That there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus. Whereby it plainly appeareth, that God (when through Christ he forgiveth sins) doth no lesse remit the punishment of them, than the fault. For otherwise our case should be most miserable (yea rather we are already cast-awayes) and the forgiveness of our sinnes availeth vs nothing, if the punishment be retained.

Isa. 53. 4.

Rom. 8. 1.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because we be vnable to beare the burthen of it; forasmuch as it is infinite no lesse lesse then the fault: for they be of the same nature.

Theo. What thinke you of the afflictions which God sendeth vnto vs, euen after the forgiveness of sinnes?

Mat. I say they be not sent to be punishments of sinnes: but to bee vnto vs in steade of chastisements and corrections to humble vs, and that we may be the wiser after: for the Apostle saith; When we are chastised, wee are instructed of the Lord, that we should not be condemned

1. Co. 11. 32.

ned with the world.

Theoph. Therefore the nature of afflictions be changed, when they be sent to the godly: for they bee not punishments of sinnes, to satisfie the iudgement of God.

Mat. You saye vvell; and the same is to be thought of the infirmities of the body: which we knowe be left vs, not to be punishments of sinnes, but an exercising of patience. The same also is to be said of death, which to vs is as a bridge, by the which wee passe ouer vnto euerlasting life, and a way is made for the resurrection; which neuerthelesse, of it owne nature is a punishment of sinne, & putteth vs in minde of it. But it is not sent to the faithfull to call them to account for their sinnes, as it commeth to passe to the wicked.

Theoph. By the solution and answer of these questions, me thinkes I vnderstand this, that by the ministry of the Church, all sinnes of what kinde soeuer be forgiven to the penitent. Moreouer, that there is no other satisfaction for them required of God, besides the most precious blood of Iesus Christ; by the which, both the fault and punishment of them is wholly taken away: which doctrine doth indeed bring the greatest consolation. Howbeit, before I make an end of this speech, I will aske you, whether Gods indulgence (or readinesse to forgive) do minister vnto men occasion to flatter themselves in their sinnes, and to continue in them.

Whether
the declara-
tion of Gods
mercie giue
men occasi-
on to continue
in their sin-
nes.

Mat. Nay rather cleane contrariwise. For, the hope & assurance of obtaining pardon, doth stir vp the godly, that they do not cloake or maintaine themselves in their sins. Whereunto that saying of the Prophet is to be referred; With thee there is mercy, that thou maiest bee feared. *Psal.* 130. 4. For, from whence is obedience, but from loue? And againe, whence is loue, but from the knowledge and assurance of Gods goodnesse towards vs? Moreouer this doctrine of the forgiveness of sinnes, pertaineth not to any, saue to the penitent. But concerning the rest, the Scripture denounceth to them the wrath and iudgement of God. Yea rather the Lord saith by the Prophet, that euen as he will forget the sinnes of him that repenteth, so he will not remem-

Ezech. 3. 20

remem-

remember the righteouſneſſe of him that ſhall turne from the right way. Whereupon it is plaine, that this doctrine doth not onely bring very great comfort to the faithfull, but alſo doth continually ſpurre them forward, to apply themſelues to amendment of life.

CHAP. II.

Of the Sacraments, ordained of God to be as it were ſeales of the Word; that we may with more aſſurance embrace the promiſe by Chriſt, reuealed in the word.

Theophilus.

What Sa-
craments
be.



It hat to we haue ſufficiently ſpoken of the miniſtery of the word. Now we are to come to the Sacraments: And firſt declare vnto me what Sacraments be?

Mat. They be ſignes and Sacramental rites, ordained of god in the Church to be adioyned to the preaching of the Word, that the promiſe

of Chriſt made in it, may bee confirmed in vs more and more.

Theo. Why are thoſe ſignes and Sacramental rites called Sacraments?

Mat. The ancient teachers of the Chriſtian Church, called them by this name, in reſpect of the aſſimily or nearneſſe betweene them and a Sacrament, that is to ſay, that ſolemne oath, by the which ſouldiers bound themſelues to the Emperour or chiefe Captaine.

Theoph. Shew me that aſſimily or agreement.

Mat. Firſt, as ſouldiers when they receiued their pay, bound theſelues to the Emperour by ſolemne oath, to liue & die vnder his gouernment ſo we when we are partakers of the ſignes, which god hath appointed in his Church, by the which he beſtoweth vpon vs ſpirituall gifts, doe binde our ſelues to him by the ſame oath. Moreouer, as ſouldiers

what.

when they tooke vpon them this oath, receiued the Emperors badge; that it might appeare, they had giuen themselves to him & were become his: so also we, when we are publickly partakers of the Sacraments which God hath instituted in his Church, do take vpon vs as it were the ensigne or armes of Christ; that it may be knowne we serue God, and professe true Religion.

Theoph. I vnderstand the reason of the word. Now let vs come to the thing it selfe. The Sacraments, thou saiest, were ordained of God, for confirmation of the promise made by God, through Christ, in his word. What is that promise?

Mat. It is expounded of Christ himselfe, in these words; So God loued the world, that he gaue his only begotten *Iohn. 3. 16.* Sonne, that whosoever beleeueth in him, should not perish but haue life euermlasting.

The Sacraments therefore be as it were visible pledges of the loue of God towards vs; by the which we are confirmed in it. But, because that loue is grounded in Christ alone, the Sacraments represent vnto vs no other thing then the vniou and fellowship that we haue with him and his gifts.

Theoph. Of whom ought the Sacraments to be administered?

Mat. Christ committed that office to them alone, to whom the preaching of the word is committed; without the Sacraments, the which neither ought the Sacraments to be administered: for they be as leaues thereof. Of whom
the Sacraments ought
to be administered.

T. cash. There is therefore a very great likenesse and agreement betweene the word and the Sacraments.

Mat. Very great. For by both of them God doth offer vnto vs Iesus Christ his Son, with all his gifts: and we are made partakers of them, if they bee not refused of vs by vnbeleefe. This only is the difference, that the preaching of the word affecteth the hearing, but the Sacraments affect the other senses. Whereupon, of a certain Father, they be most fitly called, visible words. For, they do present Christ & his benefits, as it were before our eyes, & deliuer them into our hands: that, by those sundry meanes, our faith

might be confirmed, & we come so much the neerer to him, and feele the greater working of his spirit within vs.

Theoph. What conditions bee required in the Sacraments?

Mat. Three: without which, they cannot be truly Sacraments; but false.

What conditions be required in Sacraments.

Theoph. What are those conditions?

Mat. 1. First, that they be ordained of God.

2. Secondly, that there be a commandement of God, whereby we may vse them.

3. Thirdly, that there be also a certaine promise, by the which it be assured, that we shall bee partakers of the things that are represented by them.

Theoph. Why saie you, it is necessarie that they be ordained of God?

Why the first condition.

Mat. Because, as there is none besides himselfe, which can assure vs of the loue he beareth towards vs in Christ: so is there not any man that may ordaine visible signes to confirme it. Moreouer, in the institution it selfe, there be three things to be noted:

1. The signes and Sacramentall rites.

2. The spirituall & inuisible things, signified by those signes.

3. The analogie or agreement of the signes, with the things signified.

Theo. I acknowledge it to bee necessarie, that Sacraments be ordained of God: but, I desire to vnderstand, why this also is necessary, that there should bee a commandement of God, to the entent we may vse them?

Why the second condition.

Mat. Because nothing is to be done in the Church of God, except there be first the expresse commandement of God (who in it is Lord and Master): especially when the question is of things that concerne our saluation; such as the Sacraments be.

Theoph. Why is it againe required, that there be a promise annexed?

Why the third condition.

Mat. Because, vniclesse there be a promise, the Sacraments shall be vnpromisable vnto vs. Now, that promise which on the behalfe of God hath the effect, is as it were the soule of

of the Sacraments, whereupon all their force and efficacy dependeth; and not vpon the holinesse or worthinesse of him of whom they bee ministred, or vpon the vertue of some words pronounced. Therefore, without that promise, the Sacraments shall be nothing else but vaine and fruitlesse ceremonies.

Mat. Thinkest thou that the Sacraments, if they be ministred of some wicked man & hypocrite, haue as much efficacy & force, as if they were ministred by some good man?

Mat. I thinke it, so, as on our part, we bring nothing to hinder it. As, good seede, if it finde good ground, will bear fruit, notwithstanding it be sowne of some naughtie and wicked man. For the vertue of it hangeth not vpon the sower (as neither doe the Sacraments vpon the minister); but vpon the blessing and grace of God onely.

Vpon whom
dependeth
the efficacy
of the Sa-
craments.

Theoph. Let vs come to the number of the Sacramentes. How manie bee there, in the Christian Church?

The number
of the Sa-
craments,

Mat. Twonamely, Baptisme and the Lords Supper.

Theoph. Seeing they declare vnto vs one thing, as also the word doth (namely the loue of god toward vs in Christ) what is the cause that they be two in number?

Mat. Because, by Baptisme, God doth witness, that wee be receiued of him into his couenant, through the communication of Christ & his gifts: but, by the Supper, he auoucheth that we are reteined & kept in it, till we be receiued into the heauenly life. And, for this cause, Baptisme is only once ministred, but the Supper often times.

Theo. Declare this reason, to me, more at large.

Mat. Yet, to me, it seemeth ealie. For, seeing Baptisme is the assured conuoyance vnto vs of the covenant made with vs in Christ, if it should be iterated or vsed the second time, or often, it were all one as if we said that god had abrogated or dimissed the former covenant to ordaine or appoint another: which, indeede, is altogether contrary to the very nature, truth, and constancy of God. For the Apostolic truth; With him there is no changing, or shadow of alteration. But, concerning the Supper, it is al-
14132.1.4

gether required, both for edifying and for comfort, that it be oft repeated and vsed of vs: seeing that (such is the weakenesse of our faith) we doe euery moment call into doubt whether God will continue in his loue towards vs, or no: especially, when we looke into our many sinnes, for the which we are indeed worthy to be excluded by him. But, God would assure vs of his loue, by this Sacrament: in the which he doth both offer and exhibite (or giue) Iesus Christ, vnto vs, with his treasures; in whom alone, as hath bene saide, that couenant and loue hath the foundation.

Whether
the Sacra-
ments be
necessary to
saluation.

Theoph. I will yet demand of thee one question generally pertaining to the Sacraments, before we begin the particular exposition of them both. Whether are they so necessary to saluation, that no man can be saued without partaking of them?

Mat. It is a most absurd opinion of those, who thinke that God hath tied his grace to the Sacraments. For they be only for this end ordained, that the grace and fauour, yeelded vs before in Christ, should be confirmed and ratified. Therefore it was most excellently said of an ancient Father; That the want of Baptisme did not condemne: but the contempt of it.

Bernard.
epist. 77.
Mar. 16. 16

Theoph. But Christ saith; Whoso euer beleueth and is baptized shall be saued. Out of which words it seemeth may be gathered, that Christ determineth Baptisme to be necessarie to saluation, no lesse then faith. It seemeth also that the same may be gathered concerning the Supper, out of that which Christ himselfe said in another place; Verily, verily, I say vnto yee, except ye eate the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye haue no life in ye.

Iohn. 6. 53.

Mat. In the first place, I will answer to those things which thou saidst of Baptisme. And I asseme, that in that place Christ doth not let downe the necessitie of Baptisme; but rather sheweth what that true faith is, by the which we are saued. namely, that it is not dead & ladden, but liuely, and declared by outward confession, so that the beleeuers do ioue themselves to the Church, & be partakers of the preaching of the word, & administration of the

Sacra-

sacramēts. Wherūto that saying of *Paul* ought to be referred; We belecue with the hart, to righteoufnesse; and confesse with the mouth, to saluation. And, that this is the mind of *Christ* it is gathered by the member following: for he saith; But whosoever belecueth not, shall be condemned. For if this had beene his meaning, that no man could haue bene saued without Baptisme, he would haue said thus; But whosoever shall not belecue, or shall not be baptized, shall be condemned. Seeing therefore he saith, that vnbeleefe is the cause of condemnation, by the contrarie he meaneth that faith is sufficient to saluation: which he himselfe oftentimes confirmeth, when he saith; He that belecueth in the Sonne, hath life euerlasting: but he, that belecueth not in the Sonne, shal not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. Concerning the other place, of eating the flesh of *Christ* and drinking his blood, hee doth not there intreate particularly of the supper; but generally of the vnion that we ought to haue with his bodie: which indeed is altogether necessarie to saluation; as hath beene fully proued by vs, in the first booke. But that vnion is no lesse wrought by the word apprehended in faith, then it is by the Sacraments: as hath bin said already.

CHAP. III.

Of Baptisme. by the which God testifieth that we are receiued of him into conuenant; in that he doth communicate Christ Iesus vnto vs together with his benefites.

Theophilus.



OW we are to weigh those two Sacramēts each by it selfe; and in both, those three conditions are to be searched out, that are required to make them truly Sacraments. Let vs therefore begin with Baptisme: what is the institution of it?

The institution of baptisme,

Mat. First indeede it was instituted of God, by the ministerie of *Iohn Baptist*; who thereupon had his name. Afterward it was dedicated and sanctified of Christ in his owne body, when he would be baptized of him, and when he commanded the Apostles to baptize.

Theoph. Let vs see those three things, which thou saiedst were required in the lawfull institution of a Sacrament: namely,

1. The signe, and Sacramentall rites,
2. The signification of them,
3. The likenesse and agreement between both.

The signe.

Mat. The signe of this Sacrament is water. Which signifieth the blood of Christ; that is, the force of his death: because it hath that effectuall working, in cleansing our soules from the filthinesse of sinne, which materiall water hath in cleansing our bodies. Thereupon this Sacrament hath the name of baptisme: for it signifieth a washing, or washing away. Now thou hast the signe.

The Sacramentall rite

But the Sacramentall rite is, that he which is to be baptized, be sprinkled with water, or dipped in it: which was vsed in former times; and by it two things were signified vnto vs:

1. First, that our soules are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, that is, be indeede partakers of the merite of his death: by the which, we obtaine full forgiveness of all our sins.

Tit. 3. 5.

2. Secondly, that we be regenerated into a new life. Therefore Baptisme is of *Paule*, called the bath of regeneration. By which words, those two gifts of God, that we obtain in Baptisme, are excellently noted.

Theoph. How can the sprinkling of water bee a signe or token of our regeneration?

Mat. The Scripture is wont to set downe two parts of it: namely, the mortification or death of the old man, and the rising againe of the new man; as it hath bene said of vs, in his place. But this mortification, which hath the force and working from the death and buriall of Christ, is most fitly represented by the sprinkling of water. For, it is all one as if our old man being wounded to the death, or

euen

euē swallowed vp of death it selfe) were buried with Christ. Then withall followeth the resurrectiō of the new man, which hāgeth vpon the resurrection of Christ; & is represented by the waters making cleane. For by it is signified, that together with him we do rise from the graue of death to become new creatures.

Theoph. There bee yet behinde the promise and commandement of this Sacrament.

Mat. The words of Christ, set down by *Mathevv*, do containe both; Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost. *Mat. 28. 19*

The cōmandement and promise.

Theoph. The commandement I see; but not the promise.

Mat. It is contained vnder the commandement. For when any is baptized in the name of the Father, Sonne, & holy Ghost, it is as if it were said vnto him; By this visible signe I doe assure thee, that all thy sinnes be washed away, and thy selfe regenerated, not by any vertue or force that is in me or in this water, wherewith thou art sprinkled; but by the mercy of the heauēly Father: who, for this purpose, doth, by the power of the holy Ghost, communicate vnto thee Christ Iesus his Son, with all his benefites, and vniteth thee vnto him, so as thou art made partaker of him. Seeing therefore Christ cōmandeth, that these things should be preached, it is not to be doubted, but that hee promiseth the thing it selfe, Baptisme therefore is giuen vs of God, as it were writings sealed; by the which he assureth vs of the full forgiuenesse of all our sins.

The words in Baptisme expounded.

Theoph. What sins thinkest thou be done away by Baptisme? onely originall sin?

Mat. That indeed is first done away; not that it doth not remaine in vs: but because it is not imputed. The same also we may affirme of other sins: which be effectes of it. For they be put away by this Sacrament: they bee put away (I say) both they that be past, and those that are to come. The words therefore deliuered of the Minister in Baptisme, by the cōmandement of God (namely, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Sonne, & holy Ghost) should alwaies be in our eares, euē vntil the last gaspe: and by them ought we to be assured of the full forgiuenesse

What sinnes be put away in Baptisme.

Heb. 10. 10. of our finnes. For the blood of Christ, in the which we are
11. 12. 14. once baptized, is neuer drawne cleane out, but is alwaies
9. 13. 14. fresh (as the the Apostle speaketh) that is full of efficacie &
 strength, to the continuall washing away of all our filthi-
 nesse and iniquities.

Theoph. Thou saidst in the exposition of this promise,
 Of our vniō. that in this Sacramēt, the Father did cōmunicate Christ
 Gal. Christ. and his benefits vnto vs. But both the signe of it, and the
 sacramentall rites, do onely represent vnto vs the partici-
 pation or fellowship which we haue with his death; but not
 the communion we haue with his bodie.

Mat. We haue taught in the first booke, that no man
 can be partaker of Christs benefits, which is not made one
 with him. The one therefore followeth vpon the other. By
 these things therefore it is proued, that, by Baptisme, we
 be truely made partakers both of Christs body and of
 his benefites: which also *Paule* confirmeth in these
 wordes; So many of you as be baptized into Christ, haue
 Gal. 3. 27. put on Christ.

Theoph. I come againe to the institution of Baptisme,
Mat. 28. 19 wherein Christ saith to his Apostles, Go teach all nations,
 baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and ho-
 ly Ghost. What is the cause that Christ commaundeth his
 Apostles, to teach first before they baptize?

Mat. The reason is most euident. For, seeing the Sa-
 craments be as seales of the word, it is fit that euery one
 should be first instructed in the doctrine, before hee bee
 baptized or confirmed in the same doctrine: excepting
 onely the children of the faithfull, of whom there is ano-
 ther reason, which causeth that they are to bee baptized
 presently after they be borne.

Theoph. What is that reason?

Mat. Because God hath promised, in the perso of *Abra-*
 ham, that he will be the God of the faithfull, and of their
 seede. Which tellie same thing, God confirmeth in the Law,
 when he saith; That he is such a one, as sheweth mercy to
 a thousand generations of those that loue him, and keepe
 his commandements. Seeing therefore the children of be-
 lieuers appertaine to the couenant of God, it is not to be
 doubted,

Why Christ
would haue
the word
preached,
before Bap-
tisme be ad-
ministred.

Baptizing
of children.

Exod. 20.

doubted, but that the Sacrament of it, namely Baptisme, is to be ministred to them. Which is againe confirmed by the example of the Israelites: who, by the commandement of God circumcised their children the eight day.

Theoph. Is there the same reason of Baptisme, and of Circumcision?

Mat. Yea altogether; and in very deepe it is one and the self same Sacramēt, as concerning the substance. For, after the coming of Christ, Baptisme came in place of Circumcision; and by it the gifts of God were not diminished, but increased vnto vs. For, as the Sacramēts of the new Testament haue a far more easie & plain signification then the Sacraments of the old Testament: so the force & efficacie of them is far greater.

The agreement betweene Circumcision & Baptisme.

Theoph. But what profit can there come, by Baptisme, to a child without vnderstanding and knowledge?

Mat. Much; if thou consider both the glory of God, the comfort of the parents, and finally the edification and salvation of the child.

What profite cometh by baptising of children.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. First of all God is glorified, for that hee sheweth himselfe true in his promises: by the which it is, that hee hath mercy vpo the faithfull, euen to the thousandth generation. Moreouer, the parent himselfe is wonderfully comforted, and confirmed in the loue of God, when hee seeth that not onely he himselfe is beloued of God, but also that the loue and grace of God is deriued vnto his children: which God assurmeth him of, by that visible signe. Finally, concerning the child, it hath a maruellous benefite bestowed vpon it, in that he doth so soon obtaine the partaking of Christ and his benefites; by the which he hath the inheritance of eternall life. By the remembrance whereof, when he cometh to age, hee is wonderfully confirmed in the loue and feare of God; namely, when hee calleth to mind, that he is so much esteemed of God, that euen from his comming into the world, he obtained fellowship in his covenant.

Theoph. But how can a young child by Baptisme be partaker of Christ and his benefites: seeing it is certaine that he lacketh

lacketh faith: without which, thou affirmedst before that no man can haue that fellowship.

How the
children of
beleueers
lacking faith
be partakers
of Christ.

1. Cor. 7. 14.

Mat. That indeed is true in those that be of yeares, and in such as for their age may beleue. But God worketh in the children of the faithfull, belonging to his covenant, another way vnknowne to vs. Whome also the Apostle doubteth not to call holy, insomuch as they cannot perish, seeing they haue in them a sprigge of faith: which doubtlesse, when time shal come, bringeth forth the fruits, in some sooner, & in others later; as it shal seem good to the Lord to call them.

How the
children of
the godly be
born in ori-
ginall sinne.

*Austin. de
pecc. meri.
& remis. li.
3. cap. 18.*

Theoph. I do now see, that the children of the godly are to be baptized. Notwithstanding, I will propound one question more, before I goe from the speech which I haue begun. How can it be, that those childre of the godly should be borne defiled with originall sinne, seeing their parents are purged of it.

Mat. Austin, by an excellent similitude, answereth this question, in these words; Like as chaffe, by the labour, and great diligence of man, beeing seuered from the wheate, abideth notwithstanding in the fruite which groweth of that wheat thus cleansed; so sinne, whereof by Baptisme the parents are cleansed, abideth in those whom they haue begotten. Therefore our children, except they be borne againe by a spirituall birth, cannot be accounted the children of God, nor heirs of eternall life.

CHAP. IIII.

Of the Supper of the Lord: by the which God testifieth that his covenant is enlarged in vs; forasmuch as he maketh vs more and more partakers of Christ and his benefites.

Theophilus.

Hitherto hath beene spoken of Baptisme: let vs now come to the Supper of the Lord, and let vs begin at the institution of it.

Mat. The

Mat. The Euangelistes shew that it was instituted of Christ, the same night he was betrayed, after that he had supped, & had eatē the Paschal Lamb according to the law.

Theoph. I think, it was thereupon called Supper.

Of the word
Supper, and
the instituti-
on of it.

Mat. It is called Supper, of the Apostle, not so much for this cause, as to shew that it is indeede a spirituall Supper made by God vnto the faithfull; wherein he feedeth them with the body and blood of Iesus Christ into the hope of eternall life.

Theoph. The three heads of the institution are to be examined of vs; namely;

1. The signes, & sacramentall rites,
2. Their signification,
3. And finally the likenesse or agreement betweene both.

Mat. The signes are bread and wine: which in deede do signifie the body and blood of Christ. Because the body of the Sup-
per. and blood of Christ haue that force and efficacy in the feeding of our soules, which bread and wine haue in nourishing our bodyes. And, for this cause, Christ also calleth himselfe the bread of life. *John. 6. 48.*

Theoph. What difference makest thou betweene the bread and wine of the Supper, & the bread & wine which we vse for our ordinary meat and drinke?

Mat. Truly none in the substance, but in the vse & ministering of the Supper: concerning which this I hold, that the one are set before vs for the nourishment of the body: but the other be ordained of God to be signes of the body and blood of Christ. The same also is to be thought of the water of Baptisme.

Theoph. Why be there two signes in the Supper?

Mat. To the end we might know, that in Christ we haue whole and perfect spirituall food; that is, whatsoeuer is requisite to our saluation. It was also done for a more perfect remembrance of his death. For the wine, which is the signe of his blood, doth as it were represent it before our eyes.

Why there
is a double
signe in the
Supper.

Theoph. Let vs come to the Sacramentall rite, and the signification of it.

Mat. It is double, or two-fold.

1. For

The Sacramentall rite of the Supper.

What the Ministers must doe in ministring the Supper.

What they must doe that come to the Lords Table.

1. For, the one respecteth the Minister.

2. The other, him, which is partaker of the Supper.

The first is this, to take the bread & to breake it. Where, by is signified, that Christ, with sufferings, was broken for our redemption: which himselfe declared in these words; This is my body, that is broken for you. Then, to giue it being broken, and to deliuer the wine in the cup. By which rites is meant, that God doth offer & giue Christ vnto vs, together with all his benefites. The later rite is, that he, which commeth to the Supper, should receiue, eate and drinke the bread and wine giuen vnto him. Which indeede doe signifie, that in the Supper we do truly receiue Christ, eate his body, and drinke his blood; by the which wee are nourished into the hope of eternall life, if we do not put him from vs through vnbeleefe.

Theoph. What is it, to eate the body of Christ?

Mat. To be so neerly ioined with his body, as the meat, which we eate, is with our own body.

Theoph. What is it, to drinke the blood of the Lord?

Mat. To be as truly partakers of his death and passion, as if we our selues had suffered the same. And thus doth our Sauour Christ meane, when he saith; Verilie, verilie, I say vnto you, except you eate the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, you haue no life in you. Hee, that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life. But this is to bee remembered (which wee spake before, in the Chapter of Faith) namely, that, by the merite of Christs death (represented in the holy Supper, by wine, that signifieth his blood) the Scripture vnderstandeth all the benefites of Christ; but, for the most part, maketh mention of that onely, because it hath as it were the first and chiefe place.

Theoph. Let vs go forward, What vnderstandest thou by that spirituall food, which thou saiest came by the eating of Christs body, and drinking his blood?

Our Spirituall foode in the supper.

Mat. First, peace of conscience: namely, because wee are more and more assured of the forgiveness of our sins promised by Baptisme. Secondly, the dayly growth and increase of the new man, begun in vs in our Baptisme, so as

we haue power giuen vs to serue God better, and to resist the temptations, that are wont to call vs away from his obedience. Whereupon followeth an effect of this spiritual food; namely that we are confirmed dayly in the hope of eternall life. And by these things appeareth that which I haue saide of the difference of the Sacraments; to wheet, that Baptisme doth testifie the beginning of our partaking with Christ and his benefits, and the Supper the continuance and increase therof.

Theoph. Now let vs come to the commandement and promise of this Sacrament.

Mat. Both be added, presently after the words of institution. *Take, eate, drinke you all of this, do this in remembrance of me.* Lo, there is the commaundement: then the promise, *This is my body, This is my blood.* For the meaning of these words is as much, as if Christ had said; This bread and this wine do so represent vnto you my body and blood, that they assure you, receiuing the visible signes to be indeede partakers of those thinges that be signified by them, namely of my body and blood.

Theoph. But the words of Christ seeme not to haue that meaning, but rather that the bread and wine are transubstantiated or turned into his body and blood.

Mat. The words themselves cannot beare it. For if Christ meant to haue signified that, he would haue said thus, Let this be made my body, or let it be changed into my body.

Theoph. What then were the meaning of Christs words, if they were to be expounded according to the letter, as they say.

Mat. They should rather signifie, that his body and blood were changed into bread and wine. For if any saw the pillar of salt, wheremto *Lots* wife was turned, out of all doubt he would say, This thing, that is, this pillar of salt is *Lots* wife; that he might declare that she was turned into that pillar: and such as heard those words, would take them in that sense.

Theoph. I perceiue indeed that those words if they were to be expounded literally, do properly signifie as thou saiest.

Howbeit

The exposition of Christs words.

Howbeit, that sense agreeth not to the words of Christ.

Mat. Thou thinkest rightly; and that former agreeth nothing more, namely whereon transubstantiation is builded: which indeede the verie words doe not beare; yea rather out of it foure absurdities doe follow.

Theoph. Rehearse them.

A confutati-
on of the
absurdities
following
vpon popish
transsub-
stantiation.

Mat. 1. First, if the bread and wine be turned into the body and blood of Christ, there shall be no signes in the holy Supper; and therefore it shall not be a Sacrament: which indeede cannot be without a visible signe.

2 Secondly, Christs bloode shall be separated from his body: which is most absurd, and impossible to be. Moreover, the body of Christ should be infinite: and therefore he should not be a very man; neither should he haue truly ascended into heauen. By which opinion, the chiefe points of our faith should be ouerthrowne.

The. Some do obiekt that Christs body is now glorified, and at one and the same time may be in diuerse places.

Mat. This obiection is vaine. For, when Christ instituted the Supper, his body was not glorified. Adde hereunto, that the glorification hath not taken from it the nature of a true body; but hath taken away the infirmities and weakness of it: which was verie well obserued of one of the Fathers. For this cause *Peter* saith, The heauen must hold him, vntill the time of the repairing of all things. And the Angels, in another place; So shall he come, as you haue seene him go into heauen.

Theoph. Shew the fourth absurditie.

Mat. It is this; that the wicked and hypocrites, coming to the Supper, should truly partake of the bodie and blood of Christ: which verily were nothing else but to ioyne God and Sathan together. Moreover continue vnto that which the Scripture expresse teacheth, the vnbelieuers should be saued. For Christ saith, * Who eateth my flesh, & drinketh my blood, hath euermlasting life.

Theoph. But Christ vnderstandeth those, which eate his flesh, and drinke his blood, worthily. For the Apostle saith, He, that eateth this bread, and drinketh this cup unworthily, eateth and drinketh to himselfe damnation.

* *1^o John* 9. 34
Against
those, who
say, the re-
probite, in
the supper,
be parta-
kers of
Christs body
& blood.
1. Cor. 11. 29

Mat. The

Mat. The Apostle saith not, whoſo eateth the body of Chriſt, and drinketh the blood of Chriſt vnworthily; but he that eateth the bread and drinketh the cup. For Chriſt ſhould offer his body to be prophaned, if he made the vnworthy partakers of it. Moreouer, his gifts be inſeparably ioyned with his perſon: and therefore it is impoſſible, that any ſhould communicate with his body, but the ſame alſo muſt be partakers of all his benefits, and euen of euerlaſting life. For this cauſe *John* ſaith, He that hath the Son, hath life: He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life. *1. Iohn. 5. 12*

Thoſe foure abſurdities, reckened vp by vs, do moſt manifeſtly ouerthrow the opinion of tranſubſtantiation: which is alſo diſproued by experience it ſelfe; forasmuch as the bread and wine of the Supper, if they be kept long, do corrupt. Whereupon it is plaine, that their ſubſtance is not changed.

Theoph. I do indeed perceiue, that the words of Chriſt do not eſtabliſh tranſubſtantiation, or the turning of the ſignes into the things ſignified: both becauſe the words themſelues cannot beare it; & eſpecially in this, that moſt groſſe abſurdities do follow thereupon. But, by what arguments can you prooue, that the expoſition, brought by you, doth expreſſe the ſenſe of Chriſts words, & that this was his meaning?

Mat. Seeing there muſt be an expoſition of them, it is not to be doubted, but it ought to be true & proper; being ſuch as may be confirmed by the teſtimonie of the holy Scripture, and whereupon no abſurdity followeth. But, that which I haue brought is ſuch: therfore it is true & proper.

Theo. If you proue theſe two points, you ſhal doubtleſſe overcome.

Mat. Firſt, that expoſition is confirmed by the teſtimonie of the holy Scripture. For, *Paul* thus expoundeth the words of Chriſt, inſtituting the Supper; The cup of bleſſing, which wee bleſſe, is it not the Communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread, which we breake, is it not the Communion of the body of Chriſt? Which words do indeed ſignifie no other thing, but that we ſhould vnderſtand the bread and wine to be two certain ſignes of our Communion.

1. Teſtimony of Scripture confirmeth it.
1. Cor. 10. 16

munion and fellowship with Christs bodie & blood. And that doth altogether agree with my exposition. Moreouer, these words, *This is my body*, are to haue the like exposition with these, *This is my blood*. But Luke expodeth them thus;

Luk. 22.20. This cup is the new Testament in my bloode, which is
1. Cor. 11.25 shed for you. The same exposition also did *Paule* follow, repeating the words of the institution. And this manner of speech can admit no other exposition (without wresting the words) then this, That, the wine offered in the cup is a most sure pledge of the couenant, which God hath made with vs by the pretious blood of Christ. The same therefore is to be said of the bread; namely, that it is a most sure pledge of the vnion which we haue with the bodie of Christ.

Theoph. Concerning the first thing required in a true interpretation, thou hast satisfied me: let vs now come to the other.

2. No absurdity ensuing of it.

Mat. Concerning the other, I affirmed that the exposition, which I brought, had no absurdity in it. For it hindereth not, but that we may truly eate the body of Christ, & drink his blood, to our saluation. Yea, the foure absurdities, which I spake of euen now, be auoided,

For, the signes retaine their owne nature.

The blood of Christ is not separated, from his body.

The truth of his humanity, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of the Father remaineth safe.

Finally, the vnbeleeuers are not partakers of his body and blood.

Why Christ vsed these words, and no other, in the institution of the Supper.

Theoph. If that were the meaning of Christ, why did hee not expresse it in plainer words and lesse doubtfull?

Mat. He could not expresse that promise, in fewer and more significant words. I or, if he had said, *This is a pledge or signe of my body*, there had bene no promise. It had therefore bene necessarie for him, to haue vsed long circumstance of words, after this manner; I auouch, that this bread and this wine do to represent vnto you my body and blood, that as often as ye receiue these visible signes, ye shall be truly and indeed partakers of the things, whereof they be signes. But this kinde of speech had not bene

bene of such force and weight, as that is which he vseth;
This is my blood: for it cōprehendeth all those things vnder
 it, but with a greater maiestie. And for this cause the holy
 Ghost vsed a like kind of speech in all the Sacraments of
 the old Testament: to weet, in that it giueth the name of the
 thing signified to the signes theselues; to teach vs, that the
 worthy receiuers be truly partakers of the thing signified.

The con-
 mation of
 the former
 interpreta-
 uon.

Theo. Declare that vnto me particularly, in some Sacra-
 ments of the old Church.

Mat. First, God meaning to assure *Abraham* and his po-
 steritie, that circumcision was vnto them a most certaine
 signe that they were reckened in his couenant, calleth it
 his couenant. The same also saith *Moses* of the Sacrament
 of the Pascheouer. For he calleth it the Lords Pascheouer; to
 giue the to vnderstand, that it was a most certain token of
 the good will of God. Whereof the Israelites had experi-
 ence whe the Angel destroyed the first born of the Egyp-
 tians, and passed ouer their houses without touching the:
 whereof the Pascheouer was a Sacrament.

Gen. 17. 9.
 10. 11.

Exo. 12. 11.

Theo. Indeeede these kinds of speaking doe come some-
 what neere to the words of Christ vsed in the institutio of
 the holy Supper. But I demaunde, if there bee any al-
 together like vnto them, and that haue the same meaning
 with that, which thou hast alledged?

Mat. There be. For the Apostle, speaking of the Sacra-
 ments which the Fathers vsed in the wilderness, saith;
 that the rock, that is the water, which *Moses* had (not with-
 out miracle) brought out of stone, was Christ: to teach
 that it was vnto them a most effectuell Sacrament of the
 Communion and fellowship which they had with Christ.
 For the same Apostle affirmeth; that the fathers did eate
 the same spirituall meat with vs, and dranke the same spi-
 rituall drinke. Lo therefore a manner of speech altogether
 like to that which Christ vsed in the institution of the Sup-
 per, and which hath the same interpretation, with that
 which I brought a while before. Yes and that more, where
 it is of this kinde of speech, not onely in the Scripture,
 but also in our common talke. For as a huge will torment
 an offender, the punishment of his faults, delibe-

1-Cor. 10. 4

ring vnto him his letters patents, confirmed by his hand. writing, & seale, he will say; Behold thy pardon. And yet he meaneth not, that the letters pattēts be his pardon, but onely a certaine testimony of his pardon. And this similitude very excellently agreeth with the Sacramēts; which be, as it were, seales of the word: as the Apostle testifieth, speaking of circumcision. For he calleth it the seale of the righteousness of faith.

Rom. 4. 11.

Against the
error of co-
substantia-
tion.

Theoph. I doe now see, that thy interpretation doth expresse the true meaning of Christs words. I do also graunt, that, by those words, Christ assureth vs, that we are as verily partakers of his body & blood, as we do receiue the bread and wine. But how can that be? vnderstandest thou that this body is shut vp or inclosed in the bread, and his blood in the wine?

Mat. At no hand. For the words themselues cannot any way beare it. For, Christ must then haue said; My body is with this bread, and my blood is with this wine.

20. 6. 63.

Secondly, we should holde a carnall eating: which would lead vs to the three later absurdities, reckned vp by vs, when we pake of transubstantiation; namely, that the blood of Christ should be leuered from his body; that his body should be infinite; and, finally, that the wicked, coming to the Supper, should communicate with the body and blood of Christ, and consequently obtaine euerglasting life. Moreouer, Christ himselfe doth teach the contrarie. For vnto his Disciples, iudging the speech which he had of eating his body to be hard, he answereth thus; It is the spirit that giueth life, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words, that I speake vnto you, are spirit and life. By which words, he declareth most euidently, that he speaketh not of any carnall, but of a spirituall eating.

Theoph. You haue affirmed before, that Christ, in that place, did not speake of the eating which is in the Supper; but of that, which is spirituall by faith.

Of the eating
of
Christs body
& drinking
his blood.

Mat. As the Scripture doth set before vs one Christ. so it sheweth one way, how to eate his flesh & drink his blood (that is, whereby we may be made one with him; that so we may be partakers of all his benefites): and this is, spiritually

and belly? beleeue and thou hast eaten.

Theoph. But how can it be, that Christ, which is in heauen, should truly communicate his body vnto vs, that be conuerfant vpon the earth?

Mat. That ought not to seeme maruellous vnto vs. For if the Sunne, being a creature without life, doe by his beames communicate the effect and power of it vnto vs that liue vpon the earth; by a farre stronger reason may Christ, which is the Sunne of righteousnesse, by the immeasurable power of the holy Ghost, truly make vs partakers of his body, in the Supper: to whome it is no harder to ioine together things farre distant asunder, then those that be most nigh. Which indeed appeareth euen by this, that it ioyneth together all the faithfull (albeit they be scattered here & there) into one bodie, whereof Christ is the head. That is also shadowed in the Supper. For the

1. Cor. 10. 17 Apostle saith; We which are many, are one body: for all of vs are partakers of one bread.

An obiectiō
against spiri-
tual eating.

Theoph. But some obiect, that if in the supper of the Lord we do onely spiritually and by faith communicate with the body of Christ, there is no great profite of it, seeing that is dayly fulfilled in vs, by the ministerie of the word receiued by faith.

Mat. It followeth not. For there be diuerse helpes ordained of God, to the same end; namely, to procure or further our saluation, in his Son, through the holy Ghost: eue as a good Physitiō procureth the health of the Patient, committed to his trust, by sundry means. Wherefore although, by receiuing the word in faith, Christ be already spiritually eaten of vs: yet, neuertheless this is more and more performed in the Supper: through the which the Lord so worketh according to his promise, & so nourisheth vs with the power of the holy Ghost, that our hearts bee more abundantly inflamed with his loue, and confirmed in the hope of euermouring life.

Theo. Seeing then it is certaine, that we are not otherwise partakers of Christ in the Supper, then spiritually & by faith: it followeth, that all they, which come to it without faith, haue no fruit or benefit by it.

Mat.

Mat. That indeed is most true. For, by their vnbeleefe, they refuse Christ, whom god offered to them, in the Supper. Wherefore, they be partakers onely of the signes, & that to their condemnation: seeing that (so much as in them is) they profane & vnhallo w that most holy spirituall banquet, prouided of God for his children; whiles they come vnto it not furnished with that most pretious garment, namely faith: whereby we are iustified before God, made the sons of God, and be accompted worthy to sit downe at his rable. For this cause the Apostle commandeth, that euery one should prouoe himselfe, and so eat of that bread, 1. Cor. 11. 28. and drink of that cup.

Theoph. What is the way, whereby man ought to prouoe himselfe?

Mat. Let him trie himselfe, and see whether hee haue faith; which shall be easie to perceiue, by repentance; as it hath beene said of vs in the proper place. Whosoever therefore is not any way touched with repentance, is altogether vnworthy to bee admitted to the Supper of the Lord.

Theoph. But what thinkest thou of him, that hath some feeling of repentance, though it be very little?

Mat. If it be so little, that it shew not it selfe by returning to God, & by amendment of life, it ought to bee suspected. For, true repētance, albeit it be weak, doth alwaies discouer it selfe by some outward works.

In the meane time, it is not to be doubted, but that as our faith is alwaies very weake, so it standeth with out repentance. And this doubtlesse is so, euen in the most regenerate; although diuersely: for in some it is more, in others it is lesse. Notwithstanding, it is so farre off, that this weakenesse should driue vs from the holy Supper, that it ought rather to spur vs forward to come vnto it; that by it we may be strengthened in faith and repentance: euen as the sicke man, the weaker he knoweth himselfe to bee, should so much the more diligently seeke for meate; both to receiue nourishment therby, and to reaire his strength. Therefore they only be vnworthy to come to the Lords Supper, who delight in their sinnes, and go on in them.

For, seeing they be dead in sin, they neither are worthy, nor haue further vse, of this spirituall sustenance.

Theoph. But if such men come to the Supper, what think you is to be done?

Mat. If their vnworthinesse be secret and hidden, they ought to be left to the iudgement of God; who will one day take vengeance vpon them: but if it be knowne, they ought (by order of Ecclesiasticall discipline) to be put back from it.

Theoph. What call you Ecclesiasticall discipline?

Ecclesiasti-
call disci-
pline.

1. Cor. 14.

40.

Mat. The order instituted by God in the Church, specially for two ends.

The first is, that the ministry may be vpheld, that (as *Paul* saith) all things may be done in the church decentlie and in order. Also that, vpon appointed days & at certaine times, sermons may be made, & the Sacraments administrated, & with due reuerence frequented & resorted vnto, by such as haue ioyned & betaken theselues to the christiā church. The other end is, that the conuersation and doctrine of euery one may be looked into; that such as haue giuen offense may be corrected & dealt with, according to the degrees prescribed by christ. Yea, if they be stubborn, to be at length excommunicated, that is, cut off frō the body of the Church; lest God himselfe be slandered, & the flocke (by their euill example) infected. Moreouer, that (if it bee possible) they may, (as *Paul* teacheth) by that shame, bee called to repentance.

Mat. 18. 15

16. 17.

Theoph. Of whome ought that Ecclesiasticall discipline to be exercised?

Mat. Of the Pastors of the Church: to whome are to be adioyned certaine Seniors or Ancients for this end, as necessity shall require, chosen of the Church.

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The summe of all Christian Religion,

declared in a threefolde method or order.

THEOPHILVS.



Thanks be to God, from whom we haue receiued this benefit, that we haue happily in my iudgement handled all the parts of Christian Religion. Now I would that thou shouldest draw the chief heads of it into a short summe, before we make an end of this our disputation.

Mat. That abridgement or breuiarie may be done in a triple or threefold method: so as the first may be profitable to the instruction of the godly: the other to their comfort: & the third to consist of both, by making an opposition or contrariety of true religion, with all other religions.

Theoph. Go to therefore, declare the first.

Mat. It shall declare the order of the whole booke; which indeede may be brought to fīue heads or principall points: the dependency, coherence, or linking together whereof sheweth, what certainty and truth is in euery one of them, and so in all Christian Religion, in such sort as it hath bin laid forth by vs.

The first
Epitome.

Theoph. Rehearse those chiefe points.

Mat. 1. The first intreateth of God.

2. The second of man.

3. The third of Christ.

4. The Fourth of Faith.

5. The fift of the holy Ghost.

Theoph. It shall be so much the more easie to remember them, because each of them may be applyed to eache finger of the hand. Declare them therefore to me in order, and shew me the coherence and agreement which thou diddest attribute vnto them.

Mat. First, we must hold this principle; that, God (seeing he is perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull) doth not

only shew his mercy, but doth also declare his iustice.

1st 2.

Christ.

Faith.

The Holy
Ghost.

This foundation being laide, it followeth, that man (who, of his own nature, is a wretched sinner) cannot be saved from eternal death, which he hath deserved except he have some fit meane, whereby the perfect iustice of God may be satisfied. But, there can be found no other meane, besides the merite of Christs death. For by it the wrath of God being appeased, there is a way made for vs vnto his mercie, and therefore vnto eternall life. But Christ shall profite vs nothing, except we be members of his body, and so be partakers of his benefits. And both of these we obtain by faith: which indeed sheweth it selfe by good workes; and namely by prayer. Finally, the holy Ghost worketh this faith in the hearts of the godly, by the preaching of the word and confirmeth & keepeth it, aswell by that preaching as by the vse of the Sacraments; till at length he bring vs to euerlasting life.

The second
Epitome.

Theoph. This is an excellent Breuiarie: for, in most few words and fit order, it containeth the summe of Christian doctrine, for the instruction of the godly. Now therefore let vs come to the other, which thou saiest it was profitable for the comfort of the faithfull.

Mat. That shall be set out, in an order diuerse from the former: but it may be also brought into two heads.

1. The first is of repentance.
2. The second of faith.
3. The third of Christ.
4. The fourth of God.
5. The fifth of eternall life.

And these also be ioyned together between themselves by a most close coherence & neer band, to assure the godly of their saluation.

Theoph. Shew me that band, or coherence.

Persistence.

Mat. First, whosoever doth truly repent (and that is easily perceiued, namely, when we see the God in the heart) hee hath faith. But whosoever hath faith, is partaker of Christ & his benefits. And again, whosoever is partaker of Christ and his benefits, is iustified, and made the child of God. But whosoever is iustified and made the child of

God,

God, shall be deliuered frō condemnation, and made partaker of eternall life. ^{Eternall life,} Whereupon it followeth, that hee, which by good works is assured of his repentance, shall neuer perishe but haue life euermore. And those five stairs or steps may be in stead of a ladder by the which wee may climbe vnto heauen, to vnderstand certainly whether our names be written in the booke of life, or not: but the first onely is hard.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because there is no little labour to be bestowed in the deniall of sinne, that we may serue God from the hart: but when a man by the grace of God hath profited so farre, there is very little labour behind. From hence it is, that sometimes the Scripture attributeth our saluation vnto works, namely to note vnto vs this order. As, when he saith; God will giue to euery one according to his workes. ^{Rom. 2. 6.} They shall conerthoote that haue done well, to the resurrection of life. Whereunto also that ought to be referred, which is layd in another place; blessed are they, that walk ^{John 5. 29.} in the Law of the Lord. ^{Psal. 119. 1}

Theoph. There is one doubt behind within me, which seemeth to let that the godly cannot be sure of their saluation: namely, because thereto is required, that they be sure of perseverance and continuing to the end; without which, Christ affirmeth that none can be saued. Neuertheless, there be many found, which in shewe begin happilie, yea also haue long continued in the knowledge and confession of the truth; who notwithstanding do so fall from it, that they neuer returne.

Mat. It is true indeed, that perseverance is necessary to saluation: howbeit, the Apostle affirmeth, that he which hath begun the good worke in vs, will perfect the same euen vnto the day of christ; that is, to the end of the battell. And concerning them that fall away, the words of the Apostle be manifest. They went out from vs, but they were not of vs: for if they had bene of vs, they should haue continued with vs. but this is done, that it might appear, they all were not of vs. Moreover, they be those of whom Christ speaketh, when he saith; They which receiued the seede, ^{1. Iohn. 2. 19.} ^{Mat. 23. 21} (that

(that is, the doctrine of the truth of the Gospell) in stony ground, are they which heare the word, and straight way receiue it with ioy: but they haue no roote in themselves, but are for a time; and when trouble or persecution ariseth for the words sake, they are by and by offended. But they, which receiued the seede among thornes, are such as hear the word; but the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choake the word, and it is made vnfruitfull.

Theoph. This therefore is your meaning; that they, which so fall from the profession of the Gospell, that they neuer returne againe, did neuer truly beleue the Gospell: although, for a time, they did in outward shew make profession of it.

Mat. You thinke right. For, true faith is seated in the hart, and there taketh roote by the effectuall working of the holy Ghost: which he bestoweth not vpon any, but those that be chosen of God, in Iesus Christ, vnto saluation. And, by this meanes, he openeth vnto vs the counsell of God (which we otherwise know not) concerning sauing vs. Whosoever therefore, by their true repentance, be assured of their faith, ought not to make doubt either of perseverance, or of eternall life.

Theoph. You haue touched a doctrine, which to some seemeth difficult and hard. Neuerthelesse, I would wee might speake a little of it. For, I account it among those things, which the more deeply they be searched into, the more they be obscured and darkned.

First, shew me what is the foundation of it.

Mat. First, it may be gathered out of the whole Christian doctrine; but especially out of the doctrine of iustification by faith, and of regeneration: by which we are taught, that our saluation is freely bestowed vpon vs in Iesus christ, & that it cannot spring from our selues. Seeing therefore God bestoweth not so great a benefite vpon euery one, it followeth necessarily, that they which obtaine it were chosen of God himself, according to the good pleasure of his wil; & therefore that the eternall election of God cannot be taken away, but that together with it the principall foundations

Of the eternall election of God.

By what doctrines it is proued.

datations of Christian Religion shal be ouerthrowne, & our saluation made voide.

Theoph. Is there not some expresse testimony of it, in the Scripture?

Mat. I here is: and not onely one, but more; and those most plaine. Among the which, the words of *Paul*, writing to the Ephesiāns, be the chief; God hath chosen vs in christ, before the foundations of the world were laide: making knowne vnto vs the mysterie of his will according to his good pleasure, which he had purposed in himselfe. And we are sealed with that holy spirite of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.

Proued by
testimony of
Scripture.
Eph. 1. 4. 9.
13. 14.

Theoph. A few words indeed; but such, whereby the Apostle bringeth great light to this doctrine. For it is made the easier by the distinction which he vseth, namely according to the persons of the Trinity; whiles hee attributeth the beginning or foundation of it to the Father, the matter to the Son, & the manifesting of it to the holy Ghost.

Mat. You iudge rightly: And so indeede is that doctrine to be considered, to our edification & comfort. For they, that looke to it as it were lying hid in the counsell of God, reape nothing by it, but trouble of mind and vexation of conscience. For they do, as if one, to see the better, should fixe his eyes vpon the globe of the sun: by the beholding of which light, it is not to be doubted, but his eyes would wax dim. Who, if he looked vpon that light in the Sunne beames, might haue vie of it, and see all things offered to his sight, and how & what way to direct his steps. Likewise also this doctrine, when it is considered in Christ in whome we are chosen, & we seeke for in our selues the testimony which the holy Ghost yeeldeth vs by our effectuall calling, doth then afford vs exceeding comfort, and assureth vs of our saluation, otherwise doubtfull and vnknewne vnto vs.

Theoph. What meane you by that effectuall calling, whereby you saye, that wee are by the holy Ghost assured of our election?

Of the calling of the elect.

Mat. I called it so, to put a difference between the true calling of the faithfull, and the false; which is alwaies weak and

and vnprofitable. For they, which are called by the later, will not heare the voice of God; or, if they heare it, yet are vnwilling to draw neer vnto him; or, if they draw neere, it is with a double & hypocritical hart; &, not lōg after, they fall from him. But they, that be called with the other, are enlightned by the holy Ghost, so as the word of God entreteth into their harts, they draw neer to God, & followe him with obediēce of faith. And such kind of calling, as this, is alwaies ioyned with electiō: for it is the iudge & declarer of it.

of regenerate
men.

Theoph. But that effectuall calling seemeth to be nothing elie, but the regeneratiō, which the holy Ghost worketh in vs; whereof we haue spoken before.

Mat. Thou sayest true. For, by it, he openeth our eares, to heare the voice of God, that calleth vs: He lighteneth the eyes of our mind, to know him in christ Iesus: He disposeth our harts, to beleue his doctrin, to embrace it in true faith, confesse it, and follow it: He confirmeth our will, to loue and feare him, and so to keepe our selues in the reuerence and worship of his maiesty.

of the assurance
of saluatiō.

Theoph. Therefore whosoever is assured of his effectuall calling, by the fruite of regeneration, he ought not to doubt of his election & saluation.

Mat. He ought not? Nay, contrariwise, he ought to be sure of it: which also we professe in the last article of the Creed, when we say, I beleue the life euerlasting. For by it we not onely vnderstand, that wee beleue there is an euerlasting life; but that we are assured, that we our selues shall one day be partakers of it. And that article is set at the end of the Creed, as a necessarie consequence vpon the things going before; but especially of the article concerning the holy Ghost, from whome we haue that assurance. That also doth the Lord confirme vnto vs, both by the ministry of the word, whereby he assureth the penitent of the forgiveness of their sins; & also by the Sacraments, which be as seales and pledges of that loue wherewith the Father loveth vs in Christ.

Theoph. Doth not that assurance of our election & saluation, which thou art about to perwaide the faithfull of,

make

make them slothfull to good workes?

Mat. How can that be? seeing it is certaine, that our election and saluation are confirmed by good workes: without which, as hath beene said, it can no way stand. For, which cause, *Peter* thus warneth vs; Wherefore, brethren, giue diligence to make your calling and election sure. For, if you do these things, you shall neuer fail. Moreouer, the holy Ghost, which sealeth that assurance in our hearts, cannot dwell in vs, but that also it will do good workes in vs. For this cause, *Iohn* saith, Whosoever is borne of God sinneth not; because his seede remaineth in him: neither can he sinne, because he is borne of God; that is, hee cannot so giue himselfe ouer to sinne, as to continue in it: seeing the holy Ghost hath raised him vp, by true repentance.

The assurance of saluation is confirmed by sanctification begun.

1. Pet. 1. 10

1. Iohn. 3. 9

Theo. The second Epitome bringeth no lesse comfort to the mindes of the godly, then the first did instruction. For by it, both the conscience is appeased, and the minde comforted in a most certaine hope and assurance of eternal saluation. Now the third is behinde: which thou saidest consisted of both.

Mat. It containeth an Antithesis, or contrarietie, of Christian Religion with all other. For, in the difference betweene them, a faithfull man shall see as it were a new breuiary of the Christian doctrine: which indeed shall be both to his comfort and instruction.

The third Epitome

Theoph. Let vs therefore consider that difference.

Mat. It standeth chiefly in three heades, or principall points.

1. First, that Christian Religion maketh all the chief-points of the doctrine of it, to agree with the nature of the true God: in the knowledge of whom it strengtheneth & keepeth the godly.

2. The other is, that it sealeth and establissheth the glory of God, in the saluation of men: and so the godly are more and more confirmed, in the certaintie of their saluation.

3. The third, that it worketh good workes with our saluation, by a most heerebancie: which though it be not wrought

ded vpon them) but yet so, that the faithful take no matter of boasting out of them.

4. The fourth, that it openeth an entrance for vs vnto God, to craue of him all things necessarie.

5. The fift, that it yeeldeth to the godly, matter of patience in aduersitie, and assurance in dangers. These be the true notes of Christian Religion: which indeede all other religions do vterly ouerthrow; because they admit not Christ, or else do only receiue him in part.

Christian
Religion
keepeth the
faithfull in
the know-
ledge of the
true God.

Theoph. We are therefore to weigh these notes; that we may shew them to be established of true religion, & ouerthrowen of the rest. Let vs therefore begin at the first: I would haue thee declare vnto me, how it keepeth the faithfull in the knowledge of the true God.

Mat. It doth specially appeare by this, that it maketh his perfect iustice to agree with his perfect mercie. I say, his perfect iustice, inasmuch as it seeteth before our eyes, no other way to satisfie it, but the infinite merit of Christ, his Son: wherein also his perfect mercie is manifested vnto vs, in that (of his meere grace and fauour) he gaue him to the most shamefull death of the Crosse, to be our redemption: as also, that, for his sake, he giueth vs free lie euermore, lasting life, hauing no respect to our works. For this cause, *Paul* calleth Christ the image of the inuisible God. In which words he sheweth, that God cannot be knowne, to as his perfect righteousnesse should agree with his most perfect mercie, but in Iesus Christ alone. Whereunto also ought to be applyed the words of Christ, vnto *Philippe*; *Philippe*, he that seeth mee, seeth the Father.

Col. 1. 15.

1oh. 1. 4.

Theoph. It remaineth, that you prouoe all other Religions to ouerthrow this foundation.

Fals Religion
ouerthroweth
the knowledge
of the true
God.

Mat. I will do that with a very little labour. For this is common to them all, to say, that men, by humane workes and inuentions, may satisfie the iudgement of God: & so they do ouerthrow his perfect righteousnesse, which they thinke they can satisfie with vaine deuises; by the which he is displeased. Moreover, that men, by their workes be able to defende eternall life. But, whiles they relye vpon their owne righteousnesse, thereby to obtaine saluation,

either

either in whole, or in part, they ouerthrowe the perfect mercy of God: so as they worship an Idoll instead of the true God. Whereupon is that saying of *Paule*; The hea-^{*Ephes. 2. 12*} the be without God, in the world. For as *Iohn* saith, Who.^{*1. Iohn. 3. 23*} focuer abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. And againe, Christ affirmeth; No man commeth to the^{*Iohn. 14. 6.*} Father, but by me.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other difference; and let vs see how true Religion establisheth the glorie of God, in the saluation of men; and how it assureth them of saluation.

Mat. That is done by the same doctrine: namely, be-^{*Christ's re-*} cause it teacheth, that we haue eternall life, of the mee-^{*ligion assu-*} grace of God, without any respect to our workes. For, ^{*rich men of*} by this meanes, all occasion of glorying is taken from^{*their salua-*} men; and is giuen vnto God alone: which the Apostle witnesseth. For, after that hee hath taught, that we are^{*Ephes. 2. 9.*} saued by grace, through faith; and that not of our selues, it is the gift of GOD, not of workes: hee presently addeth; least any should boast. And, in another^{*Ephes. 1. 5.*} place, hee saith; Hee hath adopted or taken vs to be his children, through Iesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will. But, whatsoeuer serueth to set forth the glorie of God, is a true and sounde foundation of our saluation. For, seeing it leaneth vpon the euermlasting and vnchangeable good pleasure of God in Christ, it is so sure to those that by true faith bee made his members, that it can neuer bee ouerthrowen: euen as Christ himselfe witnesseth, in these wordes; My sheepe heare my voice, and I know them, and they follow mee, and I giue vnto them eternall^{*Iohn. 10. 27.*} life; neither shall they perish for euer, neither shall any take them out of my hand. My Father, which gaue them to me, is greater then all: neither can any take the out of my Fathers hand. And for this cause, he saith in another place; He that beleueth in him that set me, hath euermlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; ^{*Iohn. 5. 24.*} but hath passed, from death, to life. Which things being so, the faithfull may reioyce, with *Paul*, in these wordes, I am ^{*Rom. 8. 36.*} perisua-

perswaded, that neither life nor death, neither Angels nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature can be able to separate me from the loue of God, which is in Christ Iesu our Lord.

Theo. It is now thy part to shew that this fundamentall point is ouerthrowen of other Religions.

Falſe Reli-
gious ouer-
throw the
glory of
God.

Mat. And this also shall be done most easily. For they ouerthrowe the glorie of God, & set vp the glory of man, in that they giue vnto men the glorie of their owne saluation. Yea, rather, their owne saluation is also by this means ouerthrowen: seeing that it leaneth vpon so weake a foundation, as their owne good works & merits. Whereof their owne conscience is a witnesse. For, although they deceiue themselves with counterfaying, it is continually in doubt, & troubled with distrust; but especially when they perceiue death to draw neere vnto them. For then they are to disquieted, that they cannot tell whether to turne them.

Theo. Yea, but the faithfull themselves bee sometimes appalled & beaten downe with the horror of death, & of Gods iudgement, no lesse then are the wicked.

Mat. I deny not, but that (in some sort) they be oftentimes beaten downe with it; namely, whē they set before their eyes the infinit number of their sins, & the eternallnesse of the, together with the depth of gods most perfect iustice: neuertheles, whē they cast their eyes vpon Christ crucified for the, they be presently deliuered fro that feare, in the which the wicked be indeed swallowed vp. so that they are not at al holpē by the merits of Christ. The god therefore, in that he is like a man vpon the top of a tower, whose foundation and walles are most strong. For if he looke downward he is stricken with some sodaine feare: so the which he is presently deliuered, whē he perceiueth the strength of the building. But the wicked are like vnto one on the top of a tower; but such a one, as threatneth falling, yea rather is shaken with the windes, which indeede presently falleth.

Theoph. Thou hast also sufficiently satisfied me concerning

The summe of Christian Religion.

46

ning this difference. Let vs come to the third.

Mat. It standeth herein; That, good Works be ioyned with our saluation by a most neere band; although it doe no way hang vpon them: as it hath bene declared of vs before, in the Chapter of Works. For, it cannot by any other meanes be, that we should be partakers of Christ to the obtaining of saluation, but by the power of the holy Ghost dwelling in vs: by the which we are not onely made, fit to do well; but also kept in the feare of God, so as wee runne not headlong into sinnes. Notwithstanding, although the godly do good workes, yet can they haue no cause from them to boast. For it is God that worketh, in vs, both to wil and to performe, according to his good pleasure. Wherefore they be altogether referred to the glorie of God, as also our saluation it selfe is; whereof they be most certaine markes.

22 18
True religion
containeth
the doctrine
and practise
of good
workes.

Phil. 2. 13.

Theoph. Now proue, that good workes be destroyed, by false Religions. For they brag, that these are established by them; & do say that we destroy them.

Mat. I deny not, but that false Religions do establish superstitious workes; which indeed be reiected of vs; but, good workes they destroy. For, they so basie their followers and schollers, in the obseruation of mens precepts, that they set light by, and despise Gods commandements: as, experience doth abundantly witness. Whereof this seemeth to be the chiefest cause; namely, that the wicked, to performe their workes, do trust to their owne free wil, that is, to their naturall strength (which, in very deepe, is none at all); and so they goe away from Christ: who, neuertheless, saith; As the branch cannot beare fruite of it selfe; that is, except it abide in the Vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. For, without me, ye can do nothing.

False Reli-
gions be a
gainst those
that be in-
deed good
workes.

Theoph. Declare the fourth difference.

Mat. It may bee taken from those things, which were said before of vs in the Chapter of Prayer; namely, that Christ, being made ours by faith, doth continually make intercession for vs with his Father: whereupon it is, that he is mercifull vnto vs, and heareth our prayers. The wicked, contrariwise, while they come to God in their owne

True religi-
on doth
purely call
vpon the
true God,
through the
only media-
tor: but
the wicked
doe other-
wise.

name or any other name beside Christs, doe effect nothing by their praier; both because they bee vnworthy to bee heard, and because their intercessors are not sufficient or meete for that office: for they haue not wherewith to appeale the wrath of God, most iustly kindled against him that prayeth. Therefore the vngodly can neuer obtaine any thing at the hands of God; vnlesse it be in his anger: and that, doubtlesse, falleth out to their condemnation.

Theoph. Declare the last difference: and withall shewe, how Christian Religion ministreth to the godly matter of patience in aduersitie; and, touching things to come, maketh them securely assured, & without feare.

Mat. That is done, by the doctrine of Gods providence: wherewith, when the godly vnderstand, that all things bee gouerned, although they seeme to bee compassed about on euery side with all aduersities, yet do they from thence take matter of comfort, because they knowe they are beloued of God; and consequently that aduersities be not sent but to their saluation: as it was at large declared, by vs, in the Chapter of Faith.

2 Sam. 16. For this cause, *Dauid* did beate the railings and euill speeches of *Semei* most patiently; and commaunded the souldiers to forbear to kill him: for saith he; He curseth, because GOD hath commaunded him to curse *Dauid*.
10.
Psal. 39. 10 In another place also, being most grievously oppressed of his enemies, he saith thus; I was dumbe, neither opened I my mouth: for thou O Lord diddest this. *Iob* also, hauing lost his goods (which were partly destroyed by thunder, & partly taken away by the *Chaldeans*), tooke comfort of this, that the Lord had giuen, & the Lord had taken away. By the same reason also, we are securely assured concerning things to come. for the Apostle saith; If God be with vs, who can be against vs? He that spared not his owne Son, but gaue him for vs al, how shal he not with him also freely giue vs al things? As if he had said; Seeing God is our most merciful Father, and also omnipotent, we haue good cause to hope he will deliuer vs from all dangers, so farre forth as he knoweth it behoouefull to his glorie & our saluation,
Rom. 8. 30 and

and will also giue helpe in our necessities. This is confirmed by the Prophet, in these words; Behold, the eyes of *Psal. 33* 18 the Lord are vpon such as fear him, which trust in his mercie, to deliuer their soules from death, and to quicken the in the time of famine.

The same Prophet also, in another place, warneth vs, *Psal. 37. 5* saying; Cast thy waies vpon the Lord, and trust in him, & he will bring it to passe But, other Religions take from men all matter of patience and confidence, whiles they teach that the wisdom, or foolishnesse of mé are the causes of all things that befall vs; or do imagine a certaine bare permission or sufferance of God, separated from his will; or else do admit fortune. *Falser religions driue men to impatience & desperation.*

All which things do ouerthrowe the prouidence of God, being the ground worke of comfort, to those that be assured of their saluation. It cannot therfore otherwise be, but that the vnbeleeuers are stricken with impatience, so oft as troubles affaile them. For, it falleth out to the as to dogs, which bite the stone, letting go him that threw it. But, concerning things to come, they are alwaies euen sicke with distrust; being therwith, no doubt, continually disquieted, so as they neuer be at rest.

Theoph. You haue sufficiently satisfied me with this opposition betweene Religion, and all other false religions. But, before we end this speech, I would haue a comparison made betweene the followers of them both.

Mat. It may be easily gathered of the former: yea rather, in most of the chiefe points, we should haue ioyned them both together. Neuer thelesse, seeing it so seemeth good vnto thee, I wil handle it by it selfe; to the end it may appeare that the godly, that follow the true religion, are in farre better estate, then the vngodly, foolishly giuen ouer to most fond superstitions: and that not onely in the life to come, but also in this present life, although you should reckon vp all the troubles, which we are enforced to suffer, for the profession of the Gospell.

Theoph. But how agreeth that with the saying of *Psa. 144*? *If in this life onely we belesue in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

What is this but pynesse of the godly euen in this life.

Mat. Those words of *Paul* are not contrarie to that which we haue said of the happinesse of the godly, euen in this life. For, I speake not of a happinesse that standeth in pleasures, riches, or in any earthly commodities; (for, in these, for the most part, the wicked go farre beyond them) but rather in spirituall graces, which God giueth vnto vs: namely, whē we be assured of his loue and good will; and, that more is, of our saluation by Christ. I therefore thinke with *Paule*, I hat, of all men we are most miserable, if there were not hope of a better life: especially, considering the afflictions, which we are constrained to suffer for the profession of the Gospell; from the which, in the meane time, the wicked be free. But, on the other side, wee of all men are most happie, when we haue before vs the assurance of the loue and good will of God, and the hope of our saluation. For, what matter is it if the wicked excell vs in riches, honour, and other commodities of this life? seeing they be things vaine and fleeting: which also commonly bring with them more disprofit, then profit. But we, contrariwise, haue spirituall riches, that can neuer bee taken from vs: which also bring with them sound and true ioy, and that euerlasting. Hence it is, that *Paul* affirmeth, Godlineesse is profitable to all things: as that, which hath the promises of this present life, and of that which is to come. By which words he sheweth, that the fatherly loue of God towards his children, is manifested both in this life and in the life to come.

1. Tim. 4. 8.

There sh. Shew me therefore, wherein that happinesse of the godly in this life standeth.

Mat. I say that it leaneth vpon foure foundations especially.

There sh. Declare the first.

Rom. 5. 1.
Wherein the
happinesse
of the godly
in this life
standeth, &
the happi-
nesse of
the wicked.

Mat. I hat the faithfull, being iustified by faith, haue peace with God, through Christ Iesus; through wh^{ch} faith the Apostle we haue, by faith, an entrance to that grace wherein we stand, and do glory in hope of the glorie of God. Whereby it cometh to passe, that death it selfe is not fearefull to vs: Whereas contrariwise, it striketh horrors into the wicked, by reason of the torment of con-
science,

ence, wherewith they be continually vexed.

Theo. Goe to the second.

Mat. That the faithfull, by Christ, being set free from the seruice of sinne, do ouercome their affections & lusts; whereunto the wicked be bondslaues. From hence is it, that whereas the godly lead an vnreprooueable & quiet life; the wicked contrariwise are tossed with sundry perturbations of the minde, because they cannot satisfie their lusts: and oftentimes they are vexed and tormented both in seeking to compasse them; & with pouerty and diseases, afterwards: sometimes also they become infamous, and are punished of the magistrate.

Theoph. Declaie the two last points.

Mat. The thud is this, that the godly haue alwaies an entrance to the mercy of God through Christ; and, that which more is, do by prayers obtaine of him whatsoeuer is necessarie: but the wicked are neuer heard. Finally, the godly, being assured of the good will and fauour of God through Christ, do wholly commit themselues to his prouidence: and, by the power of the holy Ghost dwelling in them, do patiently beare all aduersities; yea rather doe meekely and thankfully receiue them, as at the hand of a most kinde father. The wicked, contrariwise, remaine ouerwhelmed with the burthen of their afflictions: because they cā neuer be assured of the loue of god (of whose prouidence they be altogether ignorant); and therefore be destitute of the spirit of cōfort, & run on either into blockish senselesse, or else euen into desperation. Which things being so, it is not to be doubted, but that the state of the faithfull, euen in this life, is farre more happie thē the state of the wicked. For this cause *Dauid* (who had more then once tried all those things which haue bene saide of the godly) (speaking vnto God, saith after this manner; *Be- Psal. 84. 9.* hold o God, our shield, and looke vpon the face of thine annointed. For one day, in thy courts, is better thā a thousand elsewhere: i had rather be a doore-keeper in the house of my God, thē to dwel in the Tabernacles of wickednesse.

The reason whercof hee presently rendreth, in these words, *Because the Lord God is the Sunne and shield: bee*

ginneth grace and glorie: he keepeth back no good thing from them that vvaile vprightly. O Lord God of hostes, blessed is the man, that trusteth in thee.

Theoph. Now it remaineth, that we consider of the difference that shall be betweene the faithfull & vnfaithfull, after this life.

Mat. It shall be verie great: insomuch, that it shall farre passe that which we spake of eue now, concerning this life. For, so long as we liue vpon this earth, our happinelle lyeth hidden vnder the shame of the Crosse; and the wicked on the other side, in this life, haue for the most part all things according to their desire: for they are rich, and be in honour and fauour. But their case shall be farre otherwise, when they come to the iudgement seate of the highest Iudge. For, then, all the reproach of the godly shall bee turned into euerlasting glorie: and, on the other side, the glorie of the wicked shall bee turned into euerlasting shame.

Theo. Shew the cause of this.

Mat. You might haue gathered it from our former discourse: notwithstanding, for memorie sake, I will in fewe words repeate it, in this place: which is, That, being clothed by faith with the most perfect righteousness of Christ, we shall finde the tribunall seate of God full of mercie and grace; so as we shall be receiued into eternall glorie, together with Christ our head, the Angels and all Saintes: that so, as well of vs as of them, God may be praised, and we liue most happily for euer.

On the other side, the wicked being voide of righteousness, yea rather stained with innumerable sinnes, shall finde the iudgement seate of God, seuer: insomuch, as they shall be ouerwhelmed with the horrible wrath of his iust iudgement, & shall at length be cast into the lake of eternall fire; where, shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Out of these things therefore you may gather, that there is no Religion worthy of this honorable name, besides that which is grounded vpon Christ: forasmuch as all superstitions, which teach men not to come to God, but to goe away from him, do not reconcile them to him, but more &
more

The conclusion of the former discourse.

more prouoke him to wrath; and not onely do not bring them to saluation, but do mislead them into euerlasting destruction.

Theoph. Hitherto enough hath beene said of the *Antithesis*, or contrarietie, betweene religion and superstitions, and the followers of both. I do now see plainly, that the Christian Religion is the onely true Religion, and that the followers of it are onely happie and blessed, whether wee looke to this life, or that which is to come. For all other men are, on euery side, most miserable; yea they are more vnhappy then the brute beasts: which, while they liue, be free from all cares, and after death be deliuered from all labour and paine.

Mat. That is most true. But, as the Prophet saith: A foolish man knoweth not this: and an vnwise man vnderstandeth not this. *Psal. 92.6.*

Theoph. I am now fully satisfied, with this your holy instruction; wherein you haue run through all the chiefe points of Christian religion. And when I haue leasure, I will commit them to writing, in order as they were deliuered by you: that so both my selfe may bee edified and comforted with the reading of the, & that also I may communicate the with my brethré. In the mean time, I yeeld you most hartly thanks, for the paines which for my sake you haue taken in this behalfe.

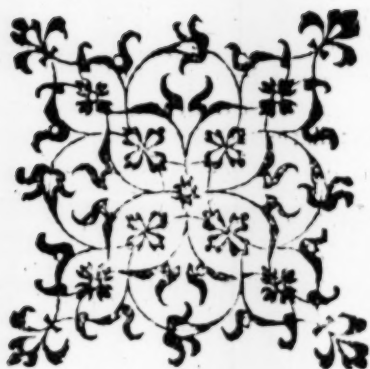
Mat. Nay rather let vs giue thanks to God our heauely Father, who (of his bounty) hath bestowed on vs this knowledge of his truth, & hath giue vs also ability to declare it. Let vs now intreat him, that as this truth is grounded only in Iesus Christ, his Sonne: so by the power of the holy Ghost it may be grafted in our minds, that we may sincerely belecue it with the hart, constantly confesse it with the mouth, & shew forth the effects of it, in outward workes, euē to our last breath. Which that it may be, I beseech god to grant vs also, that we may ioine our selues to the militant Church; and by the ministerie thereof be confirmed in the loue & feare of God: that so we may at length be receiued into the triumphant Church, together with our head and Lord, Iesus Christ.

The summe
of the duty
of Christians.

Theoph. I do therefore intreate thee (most mightie God, and heauenly Father) to vouchsafe vs these graces, and to cause that the knowledge of thy trueth may be spread abroad throughout all the world; that all may acknowledge thee the onely true God, and Iesus Christ thy Sonne the onely Sauour and Mediator of mankind. And to thee alone bee praise and glorie, both now and for euer.

Mat. Amen.

FINIS.





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